WIFE'S VICTORY

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THE WIFE'S VICTORY

A NOVEL

BY

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"Self-Raised," "Ishmael," "Retribution," "The Bridal Eve," "The Bride's Fate," "Mother-in-Law," "The Haunted Homestead," "The Bride's Dowry," "Victor's Triumph," "A Fortune Seeker," Etc.

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THE WIFE'S VICTORY.

The husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the Church. Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.—EPHESIANS, v. 23, 24.

Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
Even such a woman oweth to her husband.—SHAKESPEARE.

What thou bid'st
Unargued I obey; so God ordains.
God is thy law; thou mine.—MILTON.

"I would not have him, though he owned all the mines of Golconda," said bright Kate Gleason to her sister, Mrs. Lindal.

"And why not, pray?" said gentle Mary Lindal.

"Oh! because he has got such a horrible temper."

"How do you know that?"

"By a great many signs—by the shape of his head and the color of his hair, the glance of his eye, the curl of his nose, and the set of his mouth——"

"Oh, stop, stop, stop! Of whom are you speaking? That incomparable man—in philanthropy a Howard, in wisdom a Newton, in patriotism a Washington, in——"

"Temper a Bluebeard."

"Kate! I will not hear another word of this. You are speaking of—of——" and Mary Lindal blushed.

"Out with it! Of Grenville Dormer Leslie, your future husband. But I give you fair warning, Mary, that though you may feel a vocation to become Mrs. Bluebeard, I am not particularly inspired to play 'Anne! sister Anne!' and run the risk of catching my death of cold by standing on a windy tower, to 'see if anybody is coming,' when he is about to slay you for your disobedience."

"But perhaps I shall not be disobedient," said Mary.

"Perhaps you shall not be disobedient," repeated Kate, with a withering sneer. "Well, for my part, when I am married, if ever my husband ventures to lay a command on me, I shall make a point of breaking it, at whatever cost of convenience, by way of asserting my independence."

"Not if you love, Kate."

"Either way, either way. Now, I like Lem Dunn very well; and if neither of us change our minds, we may be married when he returns from sea; but fancy Lem Dunn playing husband *à la Grand Turque*, and daring to say,

'you shall' and 'you shall not!' Really, if I were in a good humor I should laugh in his face, and if in a bad one, I should be apt to box his ears."

"I must believe you are jesting, Catherine."

"Then I will be as serious as His Eminence Archbishop Leslie himself, and say that I really cannot see why we women should be called upon to 'honor and obey' so implicitly unless we could be first convinced of their superior excellence by whom such honor and obedience are claimed."

"We are not. We should be first convinced of men's superiority before we give them that 'right divine' to control our actions and destinies, which by all Christian and human law is the just prerogative of a husband, whether or not he be mentally or morally superior to his wife."

"Pooh! nonsense! fiddlestick! with your divine prerogative and the rest of it. If a woman marries a fool, I suppose she is bound to obey him!"

"When a woman marries a man whom she feels she cannot respect, she places herself in a false position, from which nothing can extricate her; and, however repugnant, however galling they may become, the same duties of submission and obedience are incumbent upon her in all cases where they do not clash with the laws of God. A woman in such a case is an object of deep commiseration,

although, having brought the evil upon herself by a desecration of all her most holy instincts, she suffers but a just and most fitting expiation of her fault. I could not love, and would not give myself away to a man on whose wisdom I could not reply as on God's, to whose will I could not submit as to God's."

"Idolater! Would you set up an earthly God, and fall down and worship him?"

"'Wives, submit yourself to your husbands as to the Lord!' There is Scripture for the idolatry, if you choose to call it so."

"Pshaw! If you were not talking foolishly, you would be talking wickedly. 'Satan can quote Scripture for his purpose.'"

"So he can. I am now quite convinced of that fact. But do not let us trifle with such holy and beautiful mysteries, dear Kate. There is another text of Scripture to the same purpose——"

"Oh, yes; there are hundreds! Pray, don't recite them."

"Just this one, Kate; I love it so much: 'The head of the woman is man; the head of the man is Christ; and the head of Christ is God.' Is it not a lovely chain, a beautiful climax, from weakness to Omnipotence; like Jacob's ladder from earth to heaven?"

"Sweet Providence! You have put my brains in a complete whirl, with heaven and earth, and chains and ladders, and heads and husbands; but out of the chaos one fact and feeling stands very distinctly. If Lem Dunn expects any such subordination from me, he will find himself very much mistaken. But he is not so presuming, poor Lem Dunn."

"I think you will find yourself mistaken in your estimate of his character and expectations."

"Well, perhaps so. In that case, I shall only have a little more trouble in breaking him in. But suppose, now, only for argument, that you are deceived in Leslie; suppose his temper to be violent?"

"I will take care not to arouse it."

"His will unbending?"

"I shall not waste my strength nor risk my peace by seeking to bend it."

"His nature selfish?"

Methinks, as I love and esteem him more highly than myself, I should only unite with him in his self-worship."

"His heart and mind unprincipled and depraved?"

"Impossible! impossible!" exclaimed Mary, indignantly. "I will not for a single instant suppose such a thing, even for argument's sake. I have seen my error in permitting you to go on so long. Leslie has none of the bad qualities

you have named. He is every way worthy of the highest esteem."

"And if he were not so?"

"If I were his wife, my duties would not be less incumbent upon me—would not be less scrupulously performed. But I shall not find myself in the degrading position of a wife who cannot reverence her husband, in giving myself to Leslie. I obey a divine instinct that will not mislead me; in loving him, I shall offer the best worship, and in obeying him the most acceptable service to the Deity."

Mary and Catherine Gleason had lost their parents during their infancy, and had become the charge of their grandfather, old Captain Gleason, a retired merchant. At the time Captain Gleason received his granddaughters into his house he was mourning the loss of his younger son, who was supposed to have perished at sea on his passage home from Europe. The ship in which he was to have taken passage had never been heard of since her setting sail from Liverpool, and was now believed to have been wrecked. Years flew by, and no clew was obtained to the fate of the lost ship or the lost son.

Mary Gleason, at the age of sixteen, had, in obedience to her grandfather, given her hand to Mr. Lindal, a wealthy merchant, some twenty years her senior. In the second year of her marriage she became the mother of a

lovely little girl. Soon after the birth of little Sylvia, the failure and death of Mr. Lindal left Mary again dependent upon the bounty of her grandfather, who received her and her child with the deepest sympathy and affection. Little Sylvia soon became the especial pet and plaything of the whole household.

Although Mary Lindal had faithfully discharged her duties as a wife, she had never loved her husband except as a friend. Her whole affections centered upon her child, the little Sylvia. She was her constant companion, indoors and outdoors, in parlor, chamber and street, by day, and at night she slept encircled in her arms, pressed to her bosom. At the age of four years Sylvia had been attacked with a violent and contagious fever. No words can describe the anguish of the mother as she watched, day after day and night after night, for weeks beside the bed of the little sufferer; no pen can portray the joy when, at last, her darling was pronounced out of danger.

Mrs. Lindal was very beautiful, graceful and accomplished, and a co-heiress with her sister Catherine; consequently, she was much followed and flattered. Notwithstanding her numerous admirers, and some very eligible offers, the seventh year of her widowhood had passed away, and she was still unmarried. In the meantime,

Catherine Gleason had grown up to womanhood, more radiantly beautiful than her sister had ever been.

At length, in the twenty-fifth year of her age, Mrs. Lindal became acquainted with Mr. Leslie, the subject of the conversation with which this sketch opens. Mr. Leslie was a man of great personal attractions, pure morals and distinguished talents. Mary Lindal ever listened to his brilliant conversation with delighted attention. Convinced by his clear-sighted views and able exposition of truth, she had insensibly acquired a habit of shaping her opinions by his own. There was one circumstance about their acquaintance that peculiarly attracted Mary. It was this: He never flattered her, never by any chance paid her a compliment, excepting this—the most, the only acceptable one, of constantly seeking her society.

I think it was that agreeable giber, Rochefoucault, who somewhere asserted that any woman may be safely flattered on any subject, from the profundity of her understanding to the exquisite taste of her fan. Without venturing to differ from such authority, I will simply assert that Mary Lindal was an exception to this rule.

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At the end of a twelvemonth's acquaintance, Grenville Dormer Leslie and Mary Lindal were married and took

possession of a handsome house in a fashionable quarter of the city.

An event occurred soon after their marriage that greatly pained the affectionate heart of Mary. This was the death of her grandfather. The old gentleman had made a will, leaving his property equally divided between the sisters, Mary and Catherine. This property, however, as is frequently the case, was not half so large as had been reported, and his granddaughters inherited only about twenty thousand dollars apiece. A few moments before his death, while holding little Sylvia's hand within his own, Captain Gleason turned his dim eyes on Leslie, and said: "I have been thinking of this poor child, Leslie. If time were allowed me, I would alter my will, giving her mother's share of the property to her at her mother's death, or perhaps at her own marriage. You are wealthy, Leslie, and your children, if you shall have any, will be handsomely provided for, while poor Sylvia——"

"Shall fare as one of my own," said Leslie.

"I believe you, and I thank you; now call Mary."

Leslie summoned his wife.

"Mary," said the dying man, as she came up to the bedside, "I leave you a certain sum. I wish you and Leslie to consider it as intrusted to your care for the future use of Sylvia. You will, of course, have the use of it for—

for many years to come." The old man spoke with difficulty. Turning his fast-failing eyes once more on Mr. and Mrs. Leslie, he added: "I have been so strangely thoughtless of this poor child's future—but now promise to do as I ask you." Mary promised, through her tears, while Leslie assured him that his wishes should be scrupulously fulfilled.

The old man soon after breathed his last.

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Six months after the death of Captain Gleason, Mrs. Leslie and Catherine Gleason, who was an inmate of her house, were sitting together in the parlor, engaged in needlework, and talking of the expected return of Lieutenant Lemuel Dunn, the affianced husband of Catherine, whose marriage was to take place upon the promotion of the lieutenant to a captaincy. There was a ring at the hall door, and a few minutes after "Mr. Gleason" was announced.

Both ladies rose to receive him, looking strangely at each other, and at him.

"I suppose it is impossible, ladies, that you should remember or recognize a relative who left his native country while you were yet in the nursery. I am Henry Willis Gleason, at your service."

Mrs. Leslie and Miss Gleason stood speechless with surprise and incredulity for an instant, but, quickly recovering their self-possession, greeted their new-found relative with the warmest affection.

"But my father, girls; my dear old father! Where is he? How is he?" The ladies wept. At last Catherine found words to say:

"It is six months since grandfather went to heaven."

"Oh, that he had lived to see this day!" exclaimed Mary. "Oh, that he could have lived to be blessed in your return."

"He believed me dead?" questioned Gleason.

"Yes," said Mary; "for the last ten years he has believed you dead."

The reason for his protracted absence and apparent death was now demanded and explained. It was a long story, in substance the following: Ten years before he had left his native shores to make a voyage to Europe and a tour of the Continent. After having traveled over the greater part of Europe, he visited the city of St. Petersburg and the court of Russia, where, after a residence of some months, he was so unfortunate as to give offense in some unknown manner to the Emperor, for which he was banished to Siberia for a term of ten years; and these ten years had actually been passed among the everlasting

snows of Asiatic Russia. Upon his return to St. Petersburg, after receiving his discharge, he met with some traveling countrymen of his own, who furnished him with money and everything requisite for his comfortable return home. Gleason had just concluded his narrative, when Leslie entered, who, on being introduced to him, expressed the most sincere satisfaction at his unexpected return.

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"Mary," said Mr. Leslie, entering his wife's room on the morning succeeding that of Gleason's arrival; "Mary, I wish to hold a few moments' counsel with you."

Mrs. Leslie, who, with a flushed cheek and kindling eye, was gazing upon an exquisite picture upon the easel before her, while the brush was half raised in her hand to give another touch to the piece, did not immediately hear the entrance or remark of her husband, and she started with surprise and pain as an impatient voice exclaimed at her side:

"I wish, madam, you would not consume so much time over that paltry daubing, nor become so engrossed in it as to be utterly unconscious of all that is going on around you."

Mary instantly laid down her brush (and it was years

before she again resumed it), and turned with a gentle and cheerful smile to listen to what her husband had to say.

"At the time that Captain Gleason made his will he supposed his son to be deceased, did he not?"

"Yes; from the loss of the ship, and as Uncle Henry did not return or write."

"And, if he had known that his son was living he would, of course, have left him the bulk of his property?"

"Doubtless."

"Then you must see, as I do, that the property should and must be restored to him, as the rightful heir."

"The whole of it?"

"Of course, the whole of it."

"Catherine will not agree to it."

"Catherine may do as she pleases with that which she may choose to consider is justly as well as legally her own, but the portion left to us must be given to the proper inheritor."

"The portion left to Sylvia, you mean," amended the mother, gently.

"I mean nothing of the kind," said Leslie, with cold gravity.

"Surely you remember your promise," said Mary.

"Surely, madam, I remember the promise given to a

dying father, who little thought when he exacted it that he had a living son, or that the promise ever would be urged as an excuse for keeping that son out of his just inheritance. I am pained to see, madam, that your feelings as a mother somewhat obscure your sense of justice. I shall be glad to obtain your cheerful co-operation in this matter, but, if that is not possible, I must act without it."

Mary, who saw that she had been wrong, and that a cloud had gathered upon the brow of her irritable lord, hastened to dissipate it by saying: "Yes, my motherly love has made me wish to be unjust; forgive me, and do whatever seems to you to be right. My dear husband, I will subscribe to all."

"Thank you, dear Mary. And now I will confess to you that the giving up of that money will be as great a sacrifice on my part as it is on yours in behalf of your daughter; for just at this time my business is greatly embarrassed, and the use of twenty thousand dollars for a year or so would be of incalculable benefit to me. But the sacrifice must be made, notwithstanding."

"Yes, it must be made. You are right, as you always are." But the child's interest was sacrificed, not so much to the mother's sense of justice as to her wifely duty—to her husband's will.

"Mary Leslie!" said Catherine, bursting into her sister's

bedroom with a heated and angry brow, "I hope you have not really consented to sign away all that property you had in trust for little Sylvia?"

"Yes," said Mary, quietly.

"And why? why? why have you made your child a beggar?"

"My husband thought it right to give up the property, and I obey his wishes."

"Spaniel!" exclaimed Catherine, with a withering sneer, and flung out of the room.

The necessary arrangements were soon made, and Gleason put in possessison of one-half the wealth of his deceased father. Mary Leslie saw that her child's only chance of independence was cut off forever; but she was a loyal Christian and a loving wife, and she reposed trustingly under the shadow of the goodness of God, and in the righteousness of the husband to whom He had given her. And even though it did sometimes painfully cross her mind that Leslie might have been a little more gentle with her in a controversy in which her maternal feelings were so deeply involved, she considered that his somewhat overbearing temper was the sole defect in an otherwise excellent character, and she prayed for patience and strength to "overcome evil with good." She remembered with pride and pleasure the purity and strength of princi-

ple that had forced him to alienate a sum which, however finally disposed of, would just now have so materially assisted him in his business. With Kate, however, she had much ado to keep her temper; and she looked forward with secret joy to the time when "Lem Dunn's" promotion should deliver her from the trial. Kate often indulged in a recreation which she herself denominated "speaking her mind," and which was anything but an amusement to Mrs. Leslie; so that Mary could not always refrain from repaying her in kind; for, in her love for Kate, there was not, of course, that feminine instinct of submission that characterized her love for her husband. With Mary, love was religion; and her love to God and to her husband always acted upon and augmented each other. Mary Leslie could not, therefore, be unhappy; on the contrary, her daily sacrifice of obedience would have been a source of the greatest heart-happiness, but that her husband, from real or seeming insensibility, never noticed the offering by commending the votary.

But the greatest trial and the greatest triumph of the wife were now at hand.

Twelve months succeeding the events recorded above, Mrs. Leslie sat in her parlor. It was eight o'clock in the evening, the snow was falling fast without, within everything wore an air of the greatest possible comfort. A coal

fire was glowing in the grate, a snow-white cloth was laid for tea. Mrs. Leslie reclined upon a lounging-chair near the fire; her face was somewhat paler and thinner than when we noticed her last, but scarcely less attractive. Her large, tender eyes wore an expression of holy and meditative love that was very beautiful. Her work (an embroidered slip) had fallen from her hands upon the carpet. Sylvia sat on a low stool at her feet, dressing a doll. Catherine reclined upon a distant sofa, absorbed in a novel (her constant occupation, when not visiting, dressing or disputing).

"Who are you making this for, mamma?" inquired Sylvia, taking up the little dress.

"For whom. You should try to speak correctly, darling," said her mother, coaxingly.

"Well, then, for whom, mamma, are you working this little frock?" persisted Sylvia.

"First, find out what rule of grammar you have just now transgressed, and then perhaps I may tell you, darling."

"Why can't you tell the child? For my part, I don't see the use of mystifying children," exclaimed Kate, throwing aside her book and coming to the fire.

The front door was now heard to open, and in another instant Mr. Leslie entered.

Going up to Mary with more tenderness than we have ever yet seen him display, he took her hand, and, pressing a kiss upon her brow, said:

"How are you this evening, sweet wife? Nay, sit still; I will ring for tea, or Sylvia, do you do so. Why, Sylvia, an affectionate daughter should be ever on the watch to save her mother trouble."

Sylvia sprang to obey. Tea was soon brought in, and they gathered around the table.

"I bring you good tidings, Catherine. Lieutenant Dunn has received his promotion."

"Then I congratulate the lieutenants. There is one fool the less among their number," said Catherine, piqued, perhaps, that Lem Dunn had not hastened to her with the news himself.

"Captain Dunn is now on duty, but will pay his respects to you to-morrow," said Leslie, divining her cause of dissatisfaction.

After the tea service was removed the conversation became rather constrained. Catherine took up her everlasting novel, Mary resumed her seat and her needlework. Sylvia, bent on following up the hint of her stepfather, began to arrange her mother's workbox, while Leslie walked up and down the floor, after the manner of a man who has done, or is about to do, something disagreeable.

At last he took a seat, drew a letter from his pocket, examined the superscription, turned it over, glanced at Catherine, who had closed the book and was now looking at him with quiet impudence, and finally replaced the letter in his pocket. He evidently had something to say, but was withheld by the presence of Catherine. I am really mortified to be obliged to record such a weakness on the part of the stately Mr. Leslie, but truth must come, and Mr. Leslie really stood in a little awe of Catherine. He had no sort of influence over her. She would do and say just exactly what she pleased, however disagreeable it might be, and he could not prevent her; nor could he decently turn her out of the house, nor would he descend to quarrel with her. Consequently, Mr. Leslie was ever on his guard to avoid any chance of controversy with Miss Gleason.

Fortunately, Mary, with her usual tact, saw the impatience of Leslie to unburden his mind, and, making an excuse to Catherine, retired early to her own room. Leslie followed her almost immediately.

Catherine's beautiful lips were disfigured by a mocking smile, as her glance followed Leslie from the room.

"Come, Sylvia, honey, let us go upstairs to bed. The Bashaw is meditating some new atrocity. I know it by his looks. He is afraid to let me know it, though."

"Ma'am?" said Sylvia, raising her large eyes to the face of her aunt.

"Yes; and I should not wonder if it was against you again, too. Perhaps he wants to black your face, and crisp your hair, and sell you for a negro."

"Who—no—of whom are you speaking, Aunt Catherine?"

"Of His Infallibility the Grand Seignior, your stepfather."

"Then, please do not speak of him in that way, Aunt Catherine, and call him bad names."

"Why not, miss?"

"Because mamma would not like it."

"Oh! your mamma is as great a—— But what are you staring me in the face in that manner for? Don't you know it is very rude? Come along upstairs, child."

And they left the room.

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"Something has disturbed you, Leslie," said Mary, after waiting for a few moments in vain for Leslie to open the conversation. "May I inquire, without indiscretion, what it is?"

"Certainly, Mary. I have not now, nor have I ever had, any concealments from you. I have never, from a false

sentiment of tenderness, withheld from you any cause I might have for anxiety. I have several vexing cases just now. In one of them, you have an especial, perhaps you may think an exclusive, interest."

Leslie then drew the letter from his pocket, and added:

"This letter is from Madame D'Arblay, of New Orleans, now in this city, at the Astor House."

"From whom?"

"Madame D'Arblay, the mother of the late Mr. Lindal, and the grandmother of your daughter, Sylvia."

"Oh! yes; I recollect now having heard that the mother of Mr. Lindal married the second time a Frenchman by the name of D'Arblay, and removed to New Orleans; but that was many years ago."

"Yes. And now she writes that she has been left, by the recent death of Mr. D'Arblay, entirely alone, the sole mistress of a large fortune, without a relative on earth, except her grandchild, our daughter, Sylvia."

"Well?" questioned Mary, pale with a presentiment of what was coming.

"Madame D'Arblay makes us the very handsome proposal to make Sylvia her heiress, on condition that we allow her to return with her grandmother to New Orleans, and reside permanently beneath her roof."

"But I cannot part with Sylvia," said Mrs. Leslie.

"Do not decide hastily, Mary; you must consider in this matter your child's interests, not your own feelings," said Leslie, tenderly but gravely.

"I cannot! I cannot part with her. Indeed, indeed, I cannot," cried Mary, trembling.

"But this is childish, Mary."

"It would break Sylvia's heart to leave me."

"Not at all. By no means. Grief is very short-lived with children of her age."

"Yes! yes!" exclaimed Mary, passionately, "and affection, too! and impressions, too! She will soon forget her mother. She will only be consoled for her separation from, by ceasing to love, her mother!"

"You have not a mother's disinterestedness, Mary, or you would be willing to make any sacrifice of your own feelings to secure for your child the immense advantages offered by her grandmother."

"You did not seem to consider wealth such an immense advantage twelve months ago," said Mary, bitterly.

"Mrs. Leslie forgets herself, and forgets what is due to me," said Leslie, rising and walking toward the door, adding, as he was about to leave the room, "I will leave you, Mary, by reflection and solitude, to recover your lost recollection."

Mary sprang to his side, and, seizing his hand, exclaimed, as she burst into tears:

"Forgive me! forgive me! It is the first time; it shall be the last. But my heart is so wrung, so tortured; you do not know—you could not understand, unless you were a parent. But tell me, then, how you have decided; for that you have decided I know, and that your decision is immovable I know; therefore, tell me at once; it will save us a world of useless argument, controversy, and vexation. How have you decided?"

"That Slyvia shall return with her grandmother," said Leslie, gently but firmly.

Mary let fall the hand of her husband, and, growing very faint, sunk back in her chair.

"These are the reasons that have influenced my decision," said Leslie, resuming his seat by her side: "We have deprived Sylvia, justly and righteously, it is true, but we have deprived her of the reversion of a sum that would have made her independent. At the period of that transaction, I believed that I should be able to secure Sylvia every advantage which that money would have given, and, finally, to have given her a portion of equal amount. I will now admit, that the temporary possession of that sum led me into a speculation which failed by the sudden withdrawal of it. I have never recovered that

failure, and I am now on the very brink of insolvency. Nothing but the strictest economy and the most careful financial diplomacy will save me. I have, therefore, great doubts of ever being able to carry out my plans for Sylvia; consequently, it becomes my duty, my painful duty, to determine that our daughter be given up to her grandmother."

"I did intend to say no more," murmured Mary, in a quivering voice, "yet——"

"Well?"

"Madame D'Arblay, is she a proper person, at her advanced age, to bring up a girl?"

"Read her letter," said Leslie, handing it. "You will find no infirmity there; and for the rest, you have doubtless heard enough of her piety and intelligence to feel secure that the moral and intellectual welfare of your daughter will be safe, while her vast wealth will insure her all the more worldly advantages of which she is now deprived."

"But is it not very sickly at New Orleans?"

"You have not yet read Madame D'Arblay's letter through, or you would see that she spends her summers at her villa on the Gulf, which, she says, is remarkably healthy in its location."

"When shall we have an interview with Madame D'Arblay?"

"I was thinking to-morrow, about twelve o'clock, you had better make her a call."

"And do you know—do you know how long she will stay in the city? I mean, how long shall I yet have dear Sylvia with me?" And the mother burst into tears.

"I do not know, of course, as I have not yet seen Madame D'Arblay. But we will talk no more at present, Mary; you must compose yourself. I will leave you for that purpose for a few moments. On my return, let me find you quiet." And Leslie descended the stairs.

Mary threw herself on her knees, and prayed long and earnestly, then rose calmly, and retired to rest.

"See here, Mr. Leslie," exclaimed Kate Gleason, as she entered the breakfast parlor the next morning, "what have you been saying to Mary? She is up in her chamber in tears, and Sylvia is sobbing by her side. I can't get anything out of her, but I know you are at the bottom of it. Now, what is it all about?"

"I have no explanations to make you, Miss Gleason," replied Leslie, taking his hat, and leaving the room to evade a quarrel.

"I'll make Lem Dunn call you out for that, sir!" cried Kate, as he went out.

Kate looked the very ideal of a beautiful scold, as she stood there, her bosom heaving, her cheeks glowing, eyes sparkling, lips curling and quivering, and the tangled masses of jet-black ringlets falling in tear-sprinkled disorder about her face and neck.

"Captain Dunn!" announced a servant, throwing open the door, and Captain Dunn entered.

"Ah; I'm glad you've come! I'm very glad you've come. You're come in excellent times. Go after that man! Go after him! He's—he's"—— Kate was out of breath.

"What man, dear Kate? What is the matter?" inquired Captain Dunn, in surprise.

"That Leslie!"

"Leslie! Why, what has he done?"

"He has abused his wife, and insulted me; that is, he has made her weep, and treated me with contempt."

"Tell me all about it, Kate—tell me all about it; and if he has been wanting in proper respect to my little betrothed—I'll—I'll annihilate him," said Captain Dunn, laughing; for he had known Leslie too long and too well to imagine that there could be any real cause of complaint. Unfortunately, Catherine could tell him but little about it, and that little was not very much to her credit.

"He's a terrible fellow, Kate," laughed Captain Dunn,

as she concluded her account, "a very terrible fellow, indeed. Upon second thought, I should rather not fight him. He would shoot at me—he might hit me—in which case, I might be mortally wounded, and the service would lose——"

"A coward! an arrant coward! a poltroon, who will one day bring disgrace upon the flag, if he is not hung before that day comes!" exclaimed Kate, as she flounced out of the room, in a great passion, passing Leslie, who was about to re-enter.

Captain Dunn was laughing heartily.

"You laugh now, my dear Dunn," said Leslie, smiling, "but will you laugh a year hence?"

"Yes! oh, yes! that is, I hope to do so."

"Have you no misgivings concerning your future peace?" asked Leslie, seriously.

"For my peace? I don't know; for my happiness, not one. Kate's temper amuses me beyond measure."

"Yet, I heard some ugly names called, as I came in."

"Yes! yes! Oh! I've no doubt Kate will have given me twenty beatings before this time next year."

"You will weary of it."

"Well, when the blows grow unpleasant, I have only to catch the little shrew in my arms, and hold her very

tight, until she becomes quiet and good," said Dunn, laughing.

"Ah! and then—do you know what she will do?"

"No. What?"

"Try to frighten you to death, by going into an hysteric fit, or worse—falling into a swoon."

"Ha! ha! ha! Is that Mrs. Leslie's method?"

"No! Bless dear Mary! Don't jest with her name, Dunn."

"I'll be hanged if I don't, just as much as I please. What! Haven't you been jesting with Kate's? 'It's a bad rule that won't work both ways.'"

Mrs. Leslie entered at this moment, equipped for a drive, and Leslie excused himself, and attended his wife to her carriage.

Mrs. Leslie drove to the Astor House, and was shown into the private parlor of Madame D'Arblay. Madame D'Arblay was at this time in her sixty-fifth year. Her tall, graceful, and majestic figure and stately carriage would have rather repulsed the gentle Mary, had not her face been so sweetly prepossessing. Her countenance wore an expression of holy calm, of heavenly goodness, very beautiful to look upon. Mary was at once reassured by her countenance and demeanor. They conversed a long time, the subject being a recapitulation of and enlarge-

ment upon the plan proposed in her letter. She made many inquiries, however, about Sylvia, and expressed a great desire to see her. At Mary's earnest entreaty, Madame D'Arblay consented to leave her apartments at Astor's, and take up her abode for the period of her visit at Mrs. Leslie's.

The next hour, Madame D'Arblay was comfortably ensconced in Mary's large easy-chair, by the parlor fireside. Sylvia, who had fallen in love with her at first sight, was nestling at her feet. Mrs. Leslie sat with her back to the light, to shade as much as possible her tear-stained face. Kate was sulking in her own room, and "would not be entreated" to come down and be sociable. There was so much in the pious and intelligent conversation of Madame D'Arblay to set the fears of Mary at rest on the subject of the welfare of her child, that when the dinner hour arrived, and Leslie, Captain Dunn, "Uncle Gleason," and Kate had joined them, Mary had actually become cheerful.

The month of Madame D'Arblay's visit drew to a close. Mary, after a severe struggle with herself, and much prayer, had grown composed, and tranquilly prepared Sylvia for her journey. Leslie was unusually attentive and tender toward her; Madame D'Arblay mentally condemned the seeming indifference of Mrs. Leslie to the

departure of her child, but she quietly ascribed it to the influence of her second marriage. Kate, with whom Sylvia was a great pet, had out-scolded her prototype and namesake, and was now not upon speaking terms with any of the family, and had banished "Lem Dunn" into perpetual exile—until recalled. Sylvia, childlike, was delighted with her new dresses, new books, and new toys, and the prospect of a long journey and new scenes, and had no room in her heart for painful sensations.

* * * * * * *

The last evening of Madame D'Arblay's stay arrived.

"Oh! Aunt Catherine! Aunt Catherine!" exclaimed Sylvia, bursting into Kate's sanctum, "to-morrow we're going. I'm so glad. Mamma has just laid out my new blue pelisse and velvet hood, and my nice chinchilla muff, all ready for to-morrow at six."

"Yes, miss!" said Kate, severely, "you seem very much delighted to leave your poor, pale, sick mother, who is grieving herself to death at the idea of parting with you, who do not care for her."

A thunderbolt fell upon the child's gladness, and destroyed it all at once. She burst into tears.

"Oh! Aunt Catherine, is mamma sorry? Doesn't she want me to go? I thought she wanted me to go. I for-

got I had to leave mamma; I only thought of the fun. I will run now and tell mamma that I won't go; no, that I won't." And Sylvia made for the door.

"Mr. Leslie will compel you, miss," said Catherine. The name that was a spell to all the household arrested the flying steps of Sylvia for an instant, then saying:

"I will speak with mamma," she ran out.

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Mary Leslie, who had nerved her gentle heart to go through the impending trial, was in her own room, still engaged in laying out such articles of dress as would be needed by Sylvia for the next morning. Mrs. Leslie's tranquillity was entirely overthrown by the impetuosity of Sylvia, who now burst into her presence, exclaiming, as she threw herself into her mother's arms, "Mamma! mamma! I can't leave you; I don't want to go any longer, now I know you do not wish it. I love you, mamma, better than fine clothes, and grandmothers, and journeys; and so, mamma, I cannot go, and I will not go."

Mrs. Leslie was quite unprepared for this outburst; Sylvia had been so tractable and so cheerful up to this time. She repressed her tears with difficulty, and replied, with an effort:

"Cannot and will not, Sylvia! why, what manner of words are those, and where learnt you them? You will, of course, do as your parents wish you."

"Aunt Catherine says that if they send me away from you, mamma, it will break your heart, for that you don't want me to go."

"Catherine is mistaken; listen to me, my darling Sylvia. I do want you to go; and though I may be very sorry to part with my dear little girl, yet I shall soon get over the grief, because I know it will be for her benefit. And now," added the mother, with an effort at cheerfulness, "let us talk about the fine ride in the cars you will have, and look at the pretty things I have put in your nice little traveling-basket."

"No, no, mamma! No, no, mamma! I don't care for the ride in the cars, and don't want the traveling-basket. I love you. I want to stay with you," exclaimed Sylvia, bursting into tears. "Oh, mamma, don't let me go! don't, please don't. I did not think about parting from you before, and I know I can't! indeed I can't!"

There was grief, there was agony, on the mother's countenance, as she crushed back the rising emotions of her heart, and choked back her tears. She struggled to speak, but could not do so with the calmness requisite to soothe her child. She could only press her closer to her

bosom in silence. Neither spoke for some moments; at length:

"Mamma, do you know the night you were married, when I slept alone in my little bed? Well, mamma, I cried all night; I could not sleep, because I was away from you. I knew that I should see you soon in the morning, but still I wept; yes, and I wept many nights, too, although you did not know it, and although you were not further off than the next room, and I could see you every day. Now, so many days must come and go, and so many nights pass, and—and—no mother to—to——" and Sylvia, breaking from her mother's hold, threw herself, in a fit of hysterical sobbing, upon the carpet.

"Oh! God, have mercy on me, and give me strength!" exclaimed the mother, in strong emotion, as she went toward Sylvia, stood for an instant to gain self-control, then took her child in her arms, and, reseating herself, pressed her to her bosom, smoothed back the shining ringlets of her hair, and imprinted kiss after kiss upon her fair brow, as she talked gently and soothingly to her, and, rocking her to and fro, finally succeeded in subduing her emotion. Exhaustion, after so much excitement, soon put Sylvia to sleep; yet still the mother rocked and sung, even as she had done when the little girl in her arms was a babe—thinking, perhaps, that it might be the last time

she should ever hold her thus. At last she arose, and, laying Sylvia on the bed, sunk upon her knees, and poured out her whole soul in prayer to her Creator—first, that this trial might yet be spared her, "if possible;" then, that if it were not, she might have strength and resignation to bear it cheerfully. How earnestly, passionately, fervently, she prayed! And when emotion became so great that words failed, the upturned, straining eye, the clasped hands, and heaving sighs, bore up the silent prayer; and at last, when the weary head sunk upon the folded hands, and thought no longer took the form of words, the heart, the untiring heart, still bore up the prayer, in one intense, absorbing yearning after mercy. Unknown to Mary, there was one spectator to this scene. Leslie was standing within the door. He had entered, silently and unobserved, at the moment that Mary had lain the sleeping Sylvia on the bed, and sunk down by her side in prayer. The first words of the prayer arrested his intention of coming forward or speaking. He had seen, and had heard—and never before had the pure and holy heart of his wife been so unveiled as in that prayer; and while it yet ascended, in all its Christian beauty and eloquence, he quietly withdrew from the room, murmuring, "The angel, the angel, how blind I have been! I must save her this trial; there is but one way, for I must

save her without sacrificing Sylvia." He passed to the door of Madame D'Arblay's room, and knocked. The pleasant voice of the old lady bade him enter; he did so, and merely saying, "Will you come with me to Mary's chamber, madame? She seems much distressed at the thought of parting with her daughter to-morrow." He accompanied her thither, and withdrew. Mary's voice was still heard, but in low, interrupted, and quivering tones. Her tears were falling like rain, and her hands wringing and twisting over each other; but the words of Mary's prayer, breathed, as she deemed, to the ear of God alone, unfolded the most secret thoughts and feelings of Mary's profoundly pious heart.

"Oh, God!" exclaimed Madame D'Arblay, "I did not dream of this. Mary, Mary, my dear child, arise. Your prayer is heard and answered."

Mary started in surprise to her feet, and was caught to the bosom of the old lady. "Mary, my dear daughter," said she, "your child shall not be taken from you, neither shall she lose anything by remaining with you. Oh! Mary, how little did I know you! How unjustly have I judged you, when I condemned the indifference with which you seemed to regard a separation from your child. But, Mary, how could you suppose that I would have taken my granddaughter away, had I not thought that

you were willing, nay, anxious, for her removal to my abode. Forgive me, Mary, but I fancied that your second marriage had unnaturally alienated your heart from your child; I was therefore the more anxious to receive her. But, Mary, why did you not make me acquainted with your feelings on the subject?"

Mary, who during this long speech had had time to collect herself, replied: "Mr. Leslie, madame, had determined that Sylvia should go with you. He thought that her residence beneath your roof would be a solace to you, and an advantage to herself. I could not seek to thwart his purpose, by making an appeal to your sympathies, you know, madame."

"You were right, my daughter, perfectly right. You have won my deepest love, my highest esteem, Mary Leslie! You have won it by your self-control. You have established yourself firmly and permanently in your husband's respect and affection; more than that, you have proved and know the power of faith and prayer. Never forget it, my child! Now, Mary, I must tell you my improvised plan. Though I will not take Sylvia away, neither will I leave her. I am glad this has happened. I like you, so much, Mary, I want to live with you. I have been so solitary; and, after all, a little girl is not company enough for an old woman. So, Mary, if you

will give me an easy-chair by your fireside, and a place at your table, I will even spend the close of my life with you. I will do everything for Sylvia here that I would have done at home; and when I die, I will leave her all I possess; and if she marries before that event, I will dower her handsomely. What say you, Mary?"

"Oh, madame!" exclaimed Mary, seizing her aged hands, and pressing them to her bosom and her lips, "if I have been silent, it has been from deep emotion. Words will not convey my thanks. It will take a lifetime to live my gratitude." At this moment the supper-bell rang, and its alarum awoke Sylvia from her deep sleep, who, when informed of the change in her grandmother's project, was delighted beyond measure; and, after bestowing many caresses on her grandmother and her mamma, ran to tell "Aunt Catherine" the good news. What effect the "good news" had upon Kate may be gathered from the following circumstance: Kate took pen and paper from her desk, and wrote a note. Meeting the errand-boy on the stairs as she descended to supper, she gave him the note, telling him to carry it to Captain Dunn, on board the store ship *Endymion*, promising to give him a half-dollar if he returned with an answer very quickly. Kate's note ran thus:

CAPTA.N DUNN: Will you be so kind as to call at Harters', and get 'Forest Days' for me. '*' is just out. Bring it to me this evening. Yours, etc. C. GLEASON.

For Kate, with all her impetuosity, exercised a precaution which I would recommend to all young ladies, and would not commit herself, by writing love letters or *billets-doux;* for she said: "I might change my mind, or he might change his; and then—there!" Captain Dunn answered the note in person, and took his seat with the happy family at the supper-table. Kate's good humor was entirely restored. She welcomed back her exile with affectionate frankness. Sylvia's bright eyes were glancing and flashing from one face to another, each countenance seeming to reflect its own gladness. Madame D'Arblay regarded the scene with a look of quiet self-complacency, that seemed to say, "I have made them all happy;" Mary's countenance expressed quiet and grateful happiness. Leslie's eyes were occasionally fixed upon the face of his wife, with looks of ineffable and holy tenderness. Leslie never subjected her love to another trial. He was deeply moved by the gentle resignation, the tender submission, with which she had yielded up the dearest object of her affections and her most cherished wishes, to be dealt with according to his good pleasure. That submission had given her a place [illegible] and an influence over

his heart that no beauty, grace, or accomplishments—no, nor intellectual nor moral excellence without it—could have secured.

A month from this time, a gay party was assembled at Mr. Leslie's to honor the nuptials of Captain Lemuel Dunn, U. S. N., and Miss Catherine Gleason.

The married life of Kate Gleason, who entered upon her duties with views and feelings so opposite to those of Mary, which we have endeavored to illustrate, will form the subject of another chapter.

THE MARRIED SHREW.

A SEQUEL TO

THE WIFE'S VICTORY.

Oh! when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd;
She was a vixen when she went to school;
And though she is but little, she is fierce.—SHAKESPEARE.

Kate Dunn entered the gay world of fashion first as a married woman, and decided was her success. Kate's life with her grandfather, and afterward with the Leslies, had been very domestic, and, as she expressed it, very *triste;* she had gone but little into society. Now she was resolved to have compensation, since no greater obstacle than "Lem Dunn" intervened.

Formerly she was prevented from going to balls and parties for want of proper chaperonage; now her state as a married woman rendered her independent of that. Kate was now resolved to combine all the pleasures of the maiden with the privileges of the matron; consequently,

in fashionable society, where her resplendent beauty and sparkling wit drew many admirers, she was always surrounded by a circle of young men, who were very well pleased to carry on a flirtation with a pretty woman, without the fear of a suit for breach of promise before their eyes. There was one man, however, who was constantly banished from her circle, and that man was her husband.

"There are hundreds of intelligent men and pretty women here to-night; go and amuse yourself; I shall not be jealous;" was the kind address of Kate to her husband, as he lingered by her side.

Captain Dunn walked off, and took an extra glass of wine.

"Can you not comprehend that, as we are married now, your attendance can be dispensed with; nay, more—that it is *outré*, absurd, to remember that you have a wife in the room?" was the petulant speech with which she received him when he returned after an hour's absence.

"Decidedly, Captain Dunn, you are making yourself and me appear very ridiculous by this Darby and Joan exhibition of conjugal affection. Positively we shall be cited as a 'pattern couple;' and I know nothing that could be more scandalous or alarming," said Mrs. Dunn to the

captain, as they entered the carriage to return from a large party one evening.

"I don't understand your opinions and feelings upon this subject, Catherine, but I don't like this fashionable manner of waiting upon any other woman but my own wife, and seeing her attended by any other man except her own husband."

"Oh, indeed, Captain Dunn, you make me quite sick, talking so foolishly about 'own wives' and 'own husbands;' the fact of our marriage is incontrovertible; there is no need to emphasize it so often."

"Kate's head is a little turned by her French romances, but I feel sure her principles are really sound. I will not make myself 'ridiculous,' as she would call it, by fretting and fuming, nor will I annoy her by useless remonstrance now. Give her folly its full sway; it will soon wear itself out, or——" Captain Dunn paused in his mental soliloquy, poured out and swallowed a glass of wine.

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A few weeks from this time, Captain Dunn was ordered to sea, and made preparations, with a reluctant heart, to leave his bride. A few days previous to joining his ship, he seated himself by the side of Catherine, and, passing his hands caressingly through her ringlets, said:

"You will be very lonesome in this large house when I am gone, dear wife."

"Oh! no, I shan't; I shall fill it with company; don't rumple my curls, please, captain." Captain Dunn folded his hands, and a sigh escaped him.

"I have been thinking, Kate, of inviting my mother to take up her residence here during my absence."

"To watch your wife, I presume, sir, and to look after your interests, of which you think me incapable."

"Kate! how can you——; I had no thought beyond giving you pleasure, by providing you with a desirable companion."

"Then, captain, I beg you will not trouble your mother to leave her own home, to come to me; it might greatly inconvenience her."

"Not at all. Since my sister's marriage and departure for Europe, my mother is quite alone, and very sad; she would be more cheerful here with you."

"I do not think so—old people are seldom contented out of their own homes."

"Yes, but with my mother it is different; she has an excellent heart and most serene temper, and is prepared to love you as a daughter. Besides, her support has hitherto been my most agreeable duty; but I cannot now sustain the expense of two establishments; so you see the

propriety, nay, the necessity, that obliges me to offer her a home here."

"I thought it was all on my account," sneered Kate; "however, you may be sure she would be much better off in a good boarding-house."

"Madam!" exclaimed Captain Dunn, in angry astonishment; but, quickly controlling himself, and looking seriously in his wife's face, he inquired, "Am I to understand, Catherine, that you are opposed to my mother's presence in this house?"

Notwithstanding all her assurance, Kate's eyes fell, and her cheeks glowed under the gaze that was fixed upon her. She was determined to have her own way, however, though it would require some hardihood to tell the frank and noble-hearted man before her that she was opposed to having his mother under their roof. She replied with assumed firmness, but without raising her eyes:

"I have a great respect for your mother, captain, and will show her every attention in my power; but I do dislike the idea of a mother-in-law in the same house with me; I cannot conquer my repugnance to your proposed measure, and you know, captain, with such feelings on my part, your mother and myself could not get along comfortably together."

"I certainly shall not insult her with the proposition," said Captain Dunn haughtily, as he left the room.

"I have conquered again," thought Kate. "Now, I really did feel like giving up once, but it won't do—such feelings must not be encouraged—they would soon enslave me. Men are naturally inclined to be tyrannical, particularly over their wives. Oh! yes, decidedly, I was right in the affair of the mother-in-law. Good Heavens! I could not brook a prying, fault-finding mother-in-law in the house." Could Kate have followed with her eye her husband's steps that evening, through the various scenes of dissipation to which he resorted to drown thought, she might have exclaimed, with the conqueror of old, "Another such victory will ruin me."

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Captain Dunn was absent three years, during which time Kate led a very gay life, despite the affectionate and repeated remonstrances of Mrs. Leslie and Madame D'Arblay. She thought several times of writing to or visiting Mrs. Dunn, senior; but, unhappily, she did not know her address, being ignorant what arrangement Captain Dunn had finally made for her. The subject had never been mentioned between them since the evening it was first broached. Kate's summers were usually spent at

some fashionable watering-place, and her winters in a round of visiting and amusement.

The evening of Captain Dunn's expected return home, it chanced that a brilliant ball was given by Madame la Baronne V——, the lady of the French embassador. "The beautiful Mrs. Dunn" was among the most admired of the guests.

It was after having gone through a waltz with a distinguished foreigner, that Kate sat down, when a note was placed in her hand, that read as follows:

DEAR CATHERINE—Come home; I am waitingsfor you; I should hasten to you, but I may not intrude. L. D.

"Tell Captain Dunn I will be home in an hour or two," said Catherine to the footman who brought the note.

"Very well, Thomas," said Captain Dunn, on receiving this cool reply; "bring me the morning papers, and a bottle of port."

Notwithstanding the provoking coolness of her message, when Catherine returned, a few hours after, the door was opened by Captain Dunn, who received her in his arms, and strained her to his bosom.

"Good Heavens! captain," exclaimed Kate, releasing herself, "you take my breath away—and just see how you

have crushed my dress and disheveled my hair. Pray, don't be so energetic."

"You are looking in high health and beauty, my peerless Catherine," said Captain Dunn, as he gazed upon her with pride, not noticing her petulance.

"Do reserve your gallant speeches for other women, captain, and don't waste them upon your wife."

However deeply pained Captain Dunn might have been by his wife's coolness and levity, nothing of mortification or disapproval was apparent in his manner. Captain Dunn liked to leave all his bad weather at sea.

Some twelve months succeeding this event, Mrs. Dunn presented her husband with a son and heir. "And now," thought the happy father, "my wife will love her home for her child's sake." But Captain Lemuel Dunn "reckoned without his hostess," as a very few days demonstrated.

"Where is the young sailor?" inquired he, as he took his seat by his wife's easy-chair, a few days succeeding the birth of his son.

"Mrs. Tenly has got him."

"Mrs. Tenly—who is she?"

"A young woman whom I have engaged as a wet nurse."

"Now, is it possible, Kate, that you mean to let your child be nursed at the bosom of another woman?"

"Yes; it is both possible and positive—now, don't put on that disagreeable look—it is not usual for ladies of my station——"

"Your station—a rough sailor's wife——"

"Well, don't tease me! my delicate health forbids——"

"Your delicate health! Why, Kate, you have the finest constitution of any woman I know. You enjoy high—I had almost said rude—health."

"Well, then, if you must have it, I don't intend to spoil my figure by nursing a child. And I have no idea of going about the house in a slovenly wrapper, or ill-fitting corsage, for the sentimental nonsense of nursing my own baby."

"Ha! ha! ha! that's the most amusing reason of all—for you to give, Kate, who go about the house all morning in a loose gown, with your hair in papers!"

"Captain Dunn, you're a bore."

"Well! this nurse—has she lost her own child?"

"No; she is raising it by hand."

"Then you are really cruel, as well as silly."

"Captain Dunn, please leave the room; this interview has fatigued me," said Kate, affecting languor.

If the reader will forgive the digression, I will describe a small, mean dwelling, not far from Captain Dunn's handsome house. In the basement story of a dilapidated

old house—in a miserable room, with broken-down doors, and cracked and fly-stained window-glasses—on a poor straw bed, covered with a thin, faded counterpane, lay a shivering babe. A colored girl, in tattered garments, was trying to coax a few embers to burn in the mildewed fireplace. At a cry from the awakened child, the girl gave over her hopeless efforts, and, taking the infant up, she sat down upon a low stool, and commenced rocking it backward and forward in her lap, to still its cries.

At this moment the door opened, and Mrs. Tenly, the fine ladies' nurse, entered, drew near her infant, and, while the tears coursed down her cheeks, looked upon it in silence. The little creature was now lying languidly across the girl's lap; its small limbs hung flaccidly, its tiny features were sharpened and attenuated, and its slumbers were interrupted by distressing moans.

"How has she been, Nelly?" she asked of the negro girl.

"Her has been cryin' a dreat deal, ma'am."

"Poor baby! poor little one! Oh, it is wicked, it is cruel to give your nourishment to another child—your own nourishment, that nature has provided for your own poor little feeble self—to give it to another babe, and let you perish." The mother wept convulsively, as she took the babe from the little negro.

"Clare t' de Lord, I wouldn't do it, ma'am;" exclaimed the little girl, as she busied herself making the fire, and heating some water.

"Ah, Nelly, I've tried every other way at getting bread!"

Mrs. Tenly, after washing her little one, and dressed her in her night clothes, indulged herself by rocking her a few moments in her lap. "This will not do for me, though," said she; "that other child will wake and cry, and Mrs. Dunn will be displeased." Pressing her child to her bosom once again, she laid her upon the bed, and prepared to go.

"Oh! Nelly, take good care of the baby, and I will bring you something pretty—will you, Nelly?"

"I alluz does take care of her, ma'am."

"And keep the panado warm in the corner, and give it to her when she wakes and cries in the night."

"Yes, ma'am."

Mrs. Tenly turned back to kiss the child again, and tucked her warmly up; then stopped the broken pane of the window, and left the house, her eyes streaming with tears.

This is no exaggerated picture. There are many such cases. "I speak that I do know." Mrs. Tenly had come over to this country in an emigrant ship, in company with

her husband and some hundred others. They had suffered much from sickness and privation, and many of them were provided for as paupers. But Mrs. Tenly and her husband had found a home in this wretched cellar, where, within a week after their arrival, on the same day she thanked God for the birth of her first child and wept the loss of its father. Upon her recovery from her confinement, she tried, but in vain, to procure needlework or washing. Her efforts to find a place at service were equally unsuccessful. At this time, the opportunity being presented, she put her child from her bosom, and went out as a nurse.

Mrs. Tenly could at least have gone for awhile to the almshouse, which, though humiliating to the poorest and lowest, was yet better than the sacrificing of an infant's life, by cruelly and dishonestly depriving it of its natural rights.

There is but one circumstance that can exempt a woman from the duty of nursing her own children—and that is, ill health; and even then she has no right to engage a nurse, if, by so doing, she deprives another babe of its mother.

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One morning, soon after Mrs. Dunn got about again, her nurse entered the room and said, weeping:

"Will you have the goodness to take charge of your little boy, to-day?"

"Why? What is the matter?"

"My child is dying."

"Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it. Yes, certainly you must go; but what ails your child?"

"I do not know, madam; ever since I left her to come here, she has pined away."

"I am very sorry," said Kate; "I will call over and see her; or—no, I could do no good. I will give you a note to my sister, Mrs. Leslie; she will visit and assist you; it's all in her line. But get a physician, and tell him to send his account to me; and—stay, here is your month's wages."

Thanking Mrs. Dunn for her kindness, as she received the note and the money, Mrs. Tenly withdrew.

An hour after this, Mrs. Leslie stood by the bed of the sick child.

"Oh! Mrs. Leslie, is she dying?" sobbed the mother.

"Not dying, surely not dying, and not in any immediate danger, I think—I hope."

"Oh! Mrs. Leslie, ma'am, God bless you for saying that. If my baby only lives, I shall never think anything else a trouble in the world. I'd slave for her all my life."

"We must get her into a sweet, clean, airy room, and

then, with the doctor's prescription and her mother's nursing, she will recover."

"Oh! ma'am, if I only knew how to thank you; but she won't nurse, ma'am."

"You've tried her, then."

"When I first came home I did, but she couldn't; and then I gave her the powder, and she went to sleep."

"She is awake; try her now."

Mrs. Tenly took the child in her arms, and placed it to her breast.

The babe looked up into her mother's face with a sort of sickly, inquiring smile, then let her head sink upon her mother's bosom with a sigh of intense satisfaction.

"Poor little thing, she is happy now," said her mother smiling through her tears.

"Oh! she will soon get well," said Mrs. Leslie, cheerfully. "And now, Mrs. Tenly, as I too have a little family to look after at home, I must leave for the present, but I will send my daughter over this afternoon."

"I have a commission for you, daughter," said Mrs. Leslie to Sylvia, as she laid aside her walking-dress.

"And I have a commission for you, too, dear mamma; but what is yours?"

"You must get up all your little sister's last winter's clothes, and tie them into a bundle; then tell Martha to

put on her bonnet and attend me in the pantry, bringing a large basket with her; finally, get on your pelisse and hood, to accompany her to see a sick child."

"Oh! yes, mamma, I understand;" and Sylvia flew to obey, but, dashing back in an instant, she said:

"Oh! I forgot, mamma, to tell you my commission, or, rather, uncle's. Uncle Harry has been here, and says, will you please find him a housekeeper; he wants one directly."

"Ah! I am very glad he does, Sylvia; I think we can find a very good housekeeper for uncle."

The basket of necessaries was packed and sent. The next day Mrs. Tenly and her sick child were removed into comfortable lodging, and a fortnight after, when the latter was recovered, she was put into the cars and sent twenty miles into the country, to a farm owned and occupied by Mr. Harry Gleason.

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A month succeeding these events, the Leslies and Madame D'Arblay were spending a day at Captain Dunn's. The party were assembled at dinner. Suddenly the door was thrown open and Uncle Harry Gleason stalked into the room, in a great heat, exclaiming:

"Well, Mrs. Leslie, my admirable niece! I always took you for a model of propriety. The veriest demirep could

not have made a more glaring solecism in morals than you have done!"

The company all glanced in astonishment from Uncle Harry to Mary, who was looking aghast.

"Yes, ma'am," continued Uncle Harry, "a pretty mess you have made of it. I had a good opinion of you, Mary! I send to you, rather than to an intelligence office; I ask you to find me a proper housekeeper. And what do you do? Whom do you send?"

"I earnestly hope," said Mary, recovering her self-possession, "that Jane Tenly has in no particular discredited my recommendation. She was well thought of in her humble sphere. I always thought her a very good soul."

"And am I to have every good soul in the world thrust upon me? I hate good souls. No, ma'am! I didn't want a good soul, nor a good soul's baby, neither. I wanted a housekeeper—meaning a staid, serious, settled old body, who could tuck me up at night and read me to sleep with Congressional speeches and the President's messages, and so on."

"Well, couldn't Jane do that, uncle?"

"Oh! of course she could, beau-ti-ful-ly," sneered the old man.

"Of what do you complain, then, sir, and how can we further serve or satisfy you?" inquired Leslie.

"Of what do I complain?" exclaimed Uncle Harry. "I complain of a blue-eyed woman, sir, and a baby, sir. I sent to Madam Propriety, there, for a housekeeper; and what does she send me, sir? A rosy-cheeked woman, and—and—a baby, sir! What will the neighbors say? A man of my age! a gentleman of my integrity, sir! A woman with bright brown hair, and a baby, sir! Well," said the old man, suddenly dropping his voice, "there was but one thing to be done, and that I did."

No one replied.

"And that I did."

Still all were silent.

"Why the devil don't some of you ask me what I did?" cried Uncle Harry, losing patience.

"Sent her away again?" suggested Mary.

"No, ma'am, I didn't. I never sent a woman away again in all my life, and never mean to. No, no; you know what I did well enough, although you affect stupidity, because you think it will be a mortification to me to tell it of myself. But it ain't, though! not a bit. Guess I'm old enough to judge for myself. Should like to know what right anybody has to find fault with what I do. Well! why in the devil don't some of you ask me what I did?"

"What did you do, sir?" asked Mary, coaxingly.

"I married Jane Tenly and the baby—that's what I did."

"Oh! uncle—no?" exclaimed Mary, in a tone of vexation and distress.

Kate drew herself up and regarded her uncle, scorn writhing her lip and anger flashing from her eyes.

Leslie, after an involuntary expression of surprise and displeasure, was silent.

Captain Dunn broke into a hearty and good-humored laugh, as he sprang from his seat and seized and shook Uncle Harry's hands, exclaiming:

"Well done! That's right! Wish you joy with all my heart. God bless you!"

"Ah! Dunn, you've got some heart. You see, Dunn, the old man did want some one to love. Here are my nieces, to be sure; but I am only a fourth or fifth rate person in their affections; so, Dunn, you know the old fellow wanted some one to love, who would be always in his sight; and that poor, meek, blue-eyed woman wanted a friend, and so, you see, Dunn——"

"I see! I see! It was the best thing you ever did in your life. You have given a worthy young woman a comfortable home, a respectable position, and, above all,

an excellent husband; and you have secured for yourself a handsome, good and grateful wife. I shall be always happy to receive you both at my house."

"Captain Dunn has been indulging too freely in wine, sir, else he would have added—in the basement story, as visitors of her late friends, the housemaid and cook!"

"Catherine!" exclaimed Captain Dunn, sternly.

Uncle Harry Gleason bowed to the ground with great ceremony and withdrew.

* * * * * * *

"I fear that Captain Dunn does indulge too freely in the use of wine," whispered Mary Leslie, when she found herself alone with Leslie that evening.

"I know he does," was the reply.

"What can be done?" asked Mary, sadly.

"Very little, I fear. Something, however, we must attempt. I will speak to Dunn. I will be in his company more than hitherto. And—you must remonstrate with Catherine. I fear she does not make herself or her home agreeable to her husband."

"I know she does not," sighed Mary.

The entrance of Madame D'Arblay and Sylvia, attended by a servant with lights, arrested the conversation. The ladies gathered around their worktable with their

sewing, and Leslie, opening a book, read aloud while they plied their needles. A far different scene was enacting at Captain Dunn's.

When the departure of their guests had left the Dunns alone:

"I am grieved and astonished, Catherine," said Captain Dunn, "that you should have treated your uncle so disrespectfully and cruelly."

"I am grieved, but not astonished, Captain Dunn, that you have so far forgotten what was due to yourself and me as to have invited that woman here. A man whose faculties are always obscured by the fumes of wine cannot astonish me by any act of absurdity or wickedness."

"What do you mean by that, madam?"

"I mean, sir, that you are never sober, and therefore cannot be considered a responsible human being."

"Catherine!"

"Don't you understand me yet? You are more stupid than I supposed, even. In common parlance, then, you are always drunk—and generally, by consequence, a fool."

"This is not to be endured!" exclaimed Captain Dunn, rising hastily, and pacing the floor with rapid strides; then pausing before his wife, he said, severely:

"You presume, Catherine, upon your sex, and your

feebleness. But have a care; where weakness and womanhood do not imply delicacy and gentleness, they lose their claim upon our forbearance."

"Do you threaten me, sir?" whispered Catherine, in a low, smooth, contemptuous tone of irony. "But, of course, why need I be surprised? A man who can connive at the marriage of his cast-off mistress with an honored relative, and then insult his wife by inviting the abandoned creature to his house is capable of any act of meanness."

Exasperated to frenzy by the false and monstrous charges contained in this speech, delirious with anger, Captain Dunn raised his hand, and a blow rang sharply upon the cheek of Catherine, and, seizing his hat, he rushed madly from the room and the house.

A few minutes after, Mrs. Dunn's maid found her in strong hysterics, and in that condition she was conveyed to bed.

* * * * * * *

"What in Heaven's name is all this dreadful business, captain?" inquired Uncle Harry, as he entered a private parlor in the ——— Hotel, occupied temporarily by Captain Dunn.

"I have disgraced myself—that is the amount of it," replied Captain Dunn, bitterly.

"Been drinking?"

"No, no; at least, not much."

"Been forging?"

"I have acted the part of a poltroon."

"Not received an insult or a blow, without knocking the dealer of it down—not that?"

"Worse, far worse than that; I have struck my wife."

"Hallelujah! glad on't—better late than never. Hope you gave her a good sound drubbing while you were at it. She's wanted it a long time, the hussy; she'll treat you all the better, now she's got it, 'specially if she has any fear of the discipline being repeated. Never you mind—I'm her uncle, and her natural guardian, and I approve of it; I uphold you in it," quoth Uncle Harry, his thoughts reverting to Kate's treatment of himself the day previous. "Mind, I give you leave, and I'm her uncle."

"Pray, do not talk so upon this subject, sir. Believe me, I am sunk very low in my own opinion. I have long dreaded this. I would to Heaven my patience had held out a few days longer until my ship sailed. Then this rupture might have been delayed, or might never have

occurred. Great God! that I—that I should have raised my hand against a weak, defenseless woman!"

"Well, what of it? I don't see why weak, defenseless women are not to be punished when they deserve it, as well as weak, defenseless children," exclaimed the old monster. "Would you feel any great compunction for having chastised a weak, defenseless child if he deserved it?"

"Your opinions are extremely revolting, Mr. Gleason; but I sent for you to request your good offices with Kate. She refuses to see me, and returns unopened all my notes. I wish you to see her, implore her forgiveness for me, and bring me her answer. Will you do this?"

"No, I shan't; for that would neutralize the good effect of the drubbing."

"Then I must see Mrs. Leslie immediately. Will you excuse me?"

"Yes, and accompany you."

The two gentlemen then left the house and took their way to Leslie's together.

The earnest efforts of the Leslies failed, however, to bring about a reconciliation between the parties. Catherine remained in her own room, outraged and indignant, and Captain Dunn at his hotel, busily preparing for his voyage.

The last day of Captain Dunn's stay arrived. His ship was to sail the next morning. He had made a last ineffectual effort to see his wife. She delighted to afflict him to the last safe moment, yet designed to have a full reconciliation before his departure. "Yes," said she, "tomorrow morning I will see him and forgive him. It will not do to let him go away in despair; for during three years' absence he may cease to love me—and now this evening to shine the most resplendent star in the constellation of beauty to be assembled at Madame Le Normand's ball. It is very fortunate, by the by, that this shocking affair has not got wind yet."

That night Mrs. Dunn, superbly attired, seemingly in high beauty and spirits, entered the magnificent saloon of Madame Le Normand.

That night, at the same hour, Captain Dunn took his melancholy way toward his now desolated home. Before leaving his native shores he wished to look again upon the face of his infant son. The whole front of the house looked dark as he approached it. Entering and groping his way through the gloom, along the dark passage and up the stairs, he reached the nursery door and entered the room. A small lamp was sitting on the hearth; its feeble rays revealed a scene that sent all the blood from the father's cheek. Straight up in the bed sat the in-

fant, in an attitude fixed and immovable as marble—his cheek blanched, his eyes wide open in a frightful stare, his lips apart with horror, while his gaze was fixed in deadly terror upon a dressed-up bugaboo at the foot of the bed. In an instant, seizing the bundle of sticks and rags that composed this figure, Captain Dunn threw it out of the window, and turned to his boy. The removal of the figure seemed to have dissolved the icy chain that bound the boy; for he now fell back in the bed in violent convulsions. Seizing the bell-rope, Captain Dunn now rang a peal that presently brought every remaining servant in the house to his presence.

"Thomas," said he to the first one that appeared, "run immediately for Dr. Wise. William," said he to the other man, "where is Mrs. Dunn?"

"At Madame Le Normand's ball, sir."

"And her nurse?"

"Gone out to a tea-drinking, sir."

"And the housemaid and cook? Gone, too, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

"You may leave the room. Stay! call me a carriage."

"Yes, sir."

Captain Dunn now turned to his son, whose spasms

were over, and, having placed him in a comfortable position, awaited the arrival of the physician.

At length the doctor entered, and, having looked at the child, ordered a warm bath, wrote a prescription and sent it off.

"And now, doctor, is there any chance of his recovery?" inquired Captain Dunn, after having given the doctor a full account of the causes that led to the child's seizure.

"For his full recovery, very little; this will be likely to affect him through life."

Dunn groaned.

"Doctor, could he be removed with safety, by a steamboat journey, some ninety or a hundred miles up the river?"

"With perfect safety," said the doctor.

"Then, sir, I will trouble you, if you please, to write at length your orders for his treatment on the journey, as I shall take him away to-night."

The physician, with a look of surprise, complied, and soon after took his leave.

Captain Dunn, raising the sleeping infant in his arms, threw a cloak around him, descended the stairs, entered the carriage, which had been some time before the door, and was driven toward the steamboat wharf.

At the same moment of time, Catherine Dunn, radiant with beauty and gayety, was led, smiling, to her place at the head of the cotillon forming in Madame Le Normand's saloon.

* * * * * * *

Day was dawning when Mrs. Captain Dunn drove up to her own door, and, wearied out with the night's dissipation, would have immediately sought her pillow, when her maid placed a note in her hand. She took it listlessly and ran her eyes over its contents. They were as follows:

Farewell, Catherine; farewell, infatuated woman, unduteous wife! neglectful mother! I leave you to the retribution that I pray may overtake you, in the hope that it may bring you to repentance, happily to reformation. I take your child where he may find, what he has never yet possessed, a mother's care and love—our child, whom your neglect has possibly made an idiot for life.

Frightful was the picture of passion presented by the wretched Catherine! Tearing the paper to atoms, she threw the fragments upon the floor, and would have ground them to powder with her heel. Her bosom heaved with fierce convulsions, her eyes scintillated; then, pressing her hands suddenly to her mouth, she sank upon a chair, and thence upon the floor, a stream of dark blood trickling from her lips. Her maid, in great alarm, raised

and placed her upon the bed; then, summoning her fellow-servants, sent off for Mrs. Leslie and the physician. Both soon appeared. Mrs. Dunn had broken a blood-vessel, and the long-continued hemorrhage left her in a state of utter prostration, with her life in imminent danger.

On the afternoon of that day, as Catherine lay prostrate, placid, snowy, "like a broken lily on its icy bed," her ear, rendered supernaturally acute by her condition, heard the physician's whispered injunction to her attendants:

"She must be kept perfectly quiet. Complete rest is absolutely necessary. She must not be permitted to raise a hand, scarcely to lift an eyelid, or hear a sound. Even with the best precaution a second hemorrhage will be very apt to ensue. Her life hangs upon a cobweb shred."

"And is death hovering so near?" thought Catherine; and in an instant, as though invoked by the powerful magicians, Conscience and Fear, the errors of her past life arose before her. Catherine, like most young people in high health, had never contemplated the possibility of death approaching herself, except at the close of a long, long life, at a remote, out of sight distance. Late at night Mrs. Leslie, who had never left Catherine's side

since her attack, was stealing from the room. The quick senses of the invalid detected her.

"Oh! do not leave me, dearest Mary, to die alone here with the servants."

"Dearest Catherine, I must go home a few moments, to attend to some little family matters. I will return very soon."

"Ah! go, go; I must not detain you from your family. I have no claim upon you, nor upon any human being now. There was one upon whose love I had every claim. He would have worn out his life in watching by my side; but him I have outraged, him I have alienated——"

"Oh! Catherine! Catherine! do be quiet, love. I will stay with you, but you must be perfectly quiet."

The injunction came too late. The hemorrhage broke out again, and the patient was brought immediately to the very verge of the grave.

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At early dawn, at the same hour of Catherine's attack, a steamboat stopped for a few moments, to land a passenger, near the beautiful town of C—— on the west bank of the Hudson. Captain Dunn, leaving the boat with his boy in his arms, took his way toward a white cottage, nearly hidden amidst the trees, on the bank of the river. Passing quickly through the white painted gate and up

the neat gravel walk bordered with roses, he paused and rang the door-bell. Early as was the hour, the inmates of the cottage were astir. He was met by a cleanly maid-servant, who showed him into a neat parlor, and went to summon her mistress. An old lady, in the dress of the Friends, entered the room and embraced the visitor, saying:

"Welcome, welcome, my dear son. How hast thou been these many days?"

"Indifferent, mother; indifferent! But," said he, uncovering the infant, "I have brought you my son; if you love me, dear madam, take charge of him during my absence."

"But thy wife, Lemuel! Where is she? How is she?" inquired the lady, as she received the child and proceeded to disencumber him of his outer garments.

"I know not! I care not!"

"What meanest thou, my son?"

"Listen to me, dear mother; I have but an hour to spend with you; I must be on shipboard by noon to-day; so I must be brief with my explanations." Captain Dunn here gave a rapid account of the troubles of his married life. When he concluded breakfast was placed upon the table and the old lady arose to pour out the coffee, merely saying, by way of comment upon her son's story:

"Oh! these young people! these young people! One would think with health, and youth, and competence, they would feel happiness to be a duty; but with their pride and their passions, their petulance and haste, they cast away God's richest gifts with ingratitude, as things of nought."

Twenty-four hours from this time, Captain Dunn, bearing an aching heart in his bosom, had left the shores of his native country.

* * * * * * *

Two months succeeding this event, Catherine Dunn sat up in bed for the first time since her illness. Her thin and snowy face, with the blue tracing of the veins on her temples and forehead, the languid fall of the long eyelashes, the gentle drooping of the whole figure, gave to her beauty a delicate and spiritual air it had never possessed before, while the deprecating softness of her manner silently appealed to the sympathies of all around her.

An elderly woman, who had been her faithful nurse for many weeks past, and to whose skill and unwearied attention, under Providence, she owed her life, now entered the room.

"If you please, Rebecca, I will lie down now; I feel faint."

"Yes, dear," said the old woman, as she tenderly placed

her patient in a recumbent posture, inquiring kindly if she "felt comfortable."

"Very comfortable," answered Catherine; then, looking affectionately at her nurse, she said:

"How much I owe you, dear Rebecca—not only my life, but the knowledge of that truth that makes life of value!"

"Thy gratitude is due to thy Creator, my child, and not to the feeble instrument He has been pleased to use. Thou wouldst not thank the cup, Catherine, for the coffee thou hast just taken."

"Ah, why will you not let me thank you, my dear friend—friend, indeed, as well as Friend by profession? Think! when you came to me, I was as a shipwrecked mariner on an ocean rock—all, all lost—my life not worth a moment's purchase—or, if possibly spared, objectless and aimless. Rebecca! Rebecca! though my first, best gratitude is due to God, I must thank you, too; I must love you, too."

"I had an interest, dear child, in thy recovery, and in thy spiritual health," said the nurse, looking steadily at Catherine.

"Tell me your matron name," gazing earnestly in her face.

"I am thy husband's mother, Catherine."

The dreaded mother-in-law! The hated mother-in-law! Catherine looked in the sweet face of her nurse and burst into tears.

"There, my child; drink this and compose thyself," said the old lady, pouring out a glass of water. Then she continued: "Yes, Catherine, thou wilt think it strange that a woman of my sober class and age should be masquerading in this way; but it came to pass after this manner. Nearly two months ago, hearing that thou wert ill, I came down to visit thee. Finding thee in great need of a mother's care, I determined to remain with thee. As thy state was very precarious, and any surprise would have killed thee, I agreed with Mary Leslie not to make myself known, but to attend thee as thy nurse under my given name only. Thou knowest many of my sect are called only by their given names. Thence it came more natural."

"Ah! dearest madam! I will try to repay you with a daughter's love and duty; but the debt is stupendous. And now, dear madam, will you tell me about my boy? I guessed that my husband—that the captain had carried him to you."

"Thy infant is restored to health, Catherine; but, for the better salubrity of the air, I left him at home, in

charge of a careful and trustworthy woman, who has been my own personal attendant for many years."

"And my husband—was he very much embittered against me?"

"He left thee in high displeasure, Catherine."

"Ah! yes! it could not have been otherwise; and yet I loved him, mother. Wild and passionate as I have been, I loved them both—my husband and child. Yet I never dreamed how deeply until now that they are gone from me."

"Thou shalt see thy boy soon, dear Catherine. When thou art able to travel, I propose to take thee to my country house on the Hudson. There, the pure air, the quiet scene, and the company of thy boy will effect thy complete restoration to health."

"But will my husband ever forgive me?" sighed Catherine.

"He should not be obdurate, for he has something to forgive in himself. A little more firmness on his part would have saved you much misery, had that firmness been exercised in the first days of your marriage."

"It would have taken a great deal of firmness, though, mother; for in those days, although I loved the captain, there was a perverse devil always prompting me to try him, to see how far I might go with impunity—a wish to

dine him to extremity; and I never loved him better than when I saw him in a thorough rage. This must have been insanity; was it not, mother?"

"No, my dear; I think, as thou saidst, it was Satan," said the placid Quaker. "And now I cannot allow thee to talk a moment longer; there is a fever spot already on thy cheek; so I shall draw the curtains and leave thee to repose, my child."

* * * * * * *

Three years from the time of the commencement of Catherine Dunn's acquaintance with her mother-in-law, on a winter's evening, the white cottage at C—— was lit up brightly. In the cozy parlor the cloth was laid for tea. In a large armchair in one corner sat an old lady, knitting. Upon an opposite lounge sat a young lady, employing herself with her needle, and in trying to keep awake an urchin of some five years old, who was hanging about her. But, ever and anon, she would start up and peer through the window blinds or out of the door.

At last, going out upon the piazza, she remained some time, gazing down the moonlit river. Returning to the parlor, shivering with cold, she said:

"Do you not think the boat is very long, dear mother?"

"No, my dear; it is thy impatience."

"But it is after seven, madam."

"Our clock may be fast, dear."

"Mamma, I'm so sleepy," said the child.

"Ah, Lem, do try to keep awake, that's a dear boy! See here, I'll draw you a horse on the slate. Don't you want to see papa?"

"I don't believe papa is coming to-night, and I don't want a horse."

"Hark, mother! I hear the steamboat paddle," said Catherine. "Listen!"—and the color rushed to her cheeks and the light to her eyes as she stood breathlessly waiting. Meantime, the steamboat puffed and blew and paddled past the town. There were no passengers for C—— that night. Catherine sank down in her chair, the picture of disappointment and dejection.

"Thou must learn to bear these disappointments with more equanimity, Catherine. Thy husband will probably be up in the morning boat. We must rise very early to receive him; and, in order to do so, let us take tea and go to bed."

Catherine went to bed and tried to sleep, for she wished very much to be in good looks to receive her husband; and Catherine knew that anxious vigils are bad cosmetics. Saying the multiplication table backward, and counting a thousand slowly, equally failed in their usually soporific effect. At length, ere the dawn had peeped through the

windows, the distant sound of the steamboat paddle struck upon her ear. Starting from her bed, and quickly throwing on her dressing-gown, she went into the parlor. Finding old Mrs. Dunn and her waiting-maid already up and dressed, and busy with their preparation for breakfast, Catherine hastened back, and, quickly performing her toilet, soon rejoined them, leading little Lemuel.

"Now, dear, thou wilt not be disappointed—there is the bell—there are passengers for C—— this morning," said the old lady.

Catherine flew to the door and looked out; then, fluttering in again, she said, quickly, while her color went and came:

"Yes, indeed, mother; he is hurrying up the—oh! after all, how will he receive me?"

"With love, my poor child; with joy; do—don't tremble so. Rachel, bring in the coffee." A step was heard upon the threshold—a hand upon the lock—and Mrs. Dunn and Catherine turned to greet—Mr. Leslie. The blank expression of disappointment upon the features of each of the ladies was far from flattering to their visitor. But the anxious and sorrowful expression upon Leslie's countenance soon awoke other feelings.

"What is the matter? How is Mary?" exclaimed both ladies in a breath.

"Mary is well," said he, taking the hand of each anxious questioner; "but, my dear friends, summon all your fortitude, all your piety; I have come on a most painful errand; I am the messenger of the most afflicting news. Mrs. Dunn, your son—Catherine, your husband, has ceased to exist."

"Oh, God! support thy handmaid in this trial!" groaned the old mother, sinking into her chair.

A spasm, for an instant, convulsed the frame of Catherine, but left her perfectly still; her face blanched to marble whiteness, her eyes fearfully dilated. Her calmness was frightful.

"Now, tell me all about it," said she, in a voice of supernatural steadiness; "for I have a presentiment, I have a presentiment——"

"Yes, Catherine, I will; for so I have been charged, so I have promised to do. You are aware that your husband was in the habit of indulging freely in the use of intoxicating liquors."

"I was the cause of it; I drove him to drink," said Catherine, in the same unaccountable tone.

"This habit increased upon him fearfully after he sailed; and while in port, at one of the West India Islands, he died in a fever of intoxication."

"And he died without ever guessing how I loved him;

he died without knowing my bitter repentance; he died without forgiving me! But who cares? who cares?" said she, as her eyes grew wildly bright, and she broke into a loud maniac laugh, and, springing up, threw herself—into a pair of arms that pressed her fondly, while a pleasant, manly voice exclaimed:

"Why, dearest Kate, you have been dreaming frightful dreams."

And so she had.

Kate raised her head from the bosom that supported it and looked up in bewilderment at the face of the speaker. It was Captain Lemuel Dunn, in his uniform, whose arms were around her. With a scream of joy, she buried her face once more in his bosom, and twined her arms around him. An impatient rap was now heard at the door, and Uncle Harry Gleason's voice exclaimed, quickly:

"Come! come! come! be quick with your kissing, Dunn; we all want to see her. Kate," he shouted, "get up; we are all here, Mary and all."

"Yes, Kate, get through your toilet quickly, dear one, for they are here, the whole tribe of Manasseh"—meaning all Leslie's folks and Uncle Harry's family—"all come to pass a few days with us, and to take us back, they insist, to spend Christmas with them."

"I will not leave the room until I have obtained your forgiveness," said Catherine, with tears in her eyes; "and if you knew how sorry——"

An embarrassed "I know, I know," from Lem Dunn cut short her words, as they passed into the parlor. Kate soon embraced her sister and the little ones, shook hands with Mr. Leslie, and offered her cheek to Uncle Harry, who drew himself up primly, and said:

"No, I thank you, ma'am; I've reformed my morals since my marriage. I don't kiss other men's wives now. I have got one of my own."

"Now, children, come to breakfast," said old Mrs. Dunn, taking her place at the head of the table.

There have been merrier reunions, but there never was a happier family party than the one that, in responding to the old lady's summons, sat down at her plentiful and hospitable board.

SYBIL BROTHERTON;

OR,

THE TEMPTATION.

God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape.—1ST CORINTHIANS X, 13.

Thou dwell'st on sorrow's high and barren place,
But round about the mount an angel-guard,
Chariots of fire, horses of fire, encamp
To keep thee safe for Heaven.—MRS. ELLET.

THE HOMESTEAD—THE FAMILY.

In one of the lower counties of Maryland, and in one of the first settled neighborhoods, surrounded by forest-crowned hills, and embosomed in trees, stood the mansion of the Brotherton family. It was a queer, old-fashioned house, with many gable ends and a very steep roof, and windows of diamond-shaped panes set in lead sashes.

These sashes, with the bricks of which the house was built, had been imported from "the old country."

It was the pride of the Brotherton family that they had come over with Lord Baltimore; but whether as friend or footman to his lordship, tradition saith not. I can go no further back than Hubert Brotherton, who flourished about a hundred years ago. He was a notorious fox-hunter and a celebrated *bon vivant* in general; gave great hunts, great dinners and great balls, and discovered a great talent for the manufacturing of wings wherewith his acres might fly away. His wings "worked extremely well," as inventors and patentees say—so well that Hubert Brotherton, who at twenty-one could stand upon the highest point in his native county, and, looking around, call all the land in sight his own, died at forty a poor man. It is a good illustration of the vicissitudes of life, the fact that the descendants of Hubert Brotherton, who in 1747 owned nearly a quarter part of the whole State of Maryland, in 1848 do not possess a foot of land in any country; and that the children of James Howlet, a domestic of the Brotherton family, have risen to the highest places in the army, the navy and the Senate; but, then, the former sank through idleness, sensuality and extravagance; the latter rose by energy, industry and sobriety.

Brotherton Hall had been some years in chancery at the time our story commences. The sole representatives of the Brotherton family were, now, Mrs. Judith Brotherton and her granddaughter Sybil. That dear old lady was a character! Heaven bless her! I fear I shall caricature the portrait in trying to portray her excellent, but somewhat complex nature. Just as when I was a little girl, and would have some beautiful ideal face haunting my imagination, and, taking a pencil to draw it, would produce some hideous monstrosity, and throw away pencil and sketch in disgust.

Mrs. Brotherton had been very handsome in her youth, and was still a fine-looking old lady. She had a tall, stately figure, with singularly small feet and hands. Her high forehead and small Roman nose were relieved from hauteur by the tender expression of her deep-blue eyes and the beautiful contour of her mouth. Now, don't sneer, young ladies and gentlemen; I have seen both old men and old women with very beautiful and attractive faces, albeit somewhat gray and wrinkled, and, when I was a schoolgirl I was very near falling in love with an old gentleman of sixty for his beautiful smile and musical voice, and the fervent soul breathing through both.

But to my story. Mrs. Brotherton, to complete her portrait, generally wore a black satin dress, with a fine

white muslin handkerchief over her bosom, and a plain cap of lace on her head. Mrs. Brotherton's character was very remarkable for three qualities—high family pride, warm benevolence of heart, and great romance of mind. Her benevolence always kept her pride in check, so that it never became arrogant, but was only manifested in her great solicitude in keeping her children from forming acquaintances or connections with the *nouveaux riches* of the neighborhood. Her benevolence had made great inroads upon her small fortune, and, for her thirdly-mentioned distinguishing trait, her romance of disposition, so far swept her flights of fancy that, at the age of sixty, she would look upon her beautiful Sybil and wish she could send her "home," as she fondly termed Old England, where she felt sure her lovely child would captivate some baron, earl or duke. There was one rare feature in her mind more charming than even her benevolence. It was the simple, child-like trustfulness of disposition that led her to reverse the rule of the worldling, and to believe every man and woman to be perfectly good until she had experimentally found them to be otherwise.

Sybil Brotherton was a slight, fair girl, with a broad white forehead, large, pensive, blue eyes and a sweet smile; a child of gentle and graceful movements, of low, sweet tones, and of loving and pious heart. Sybil, too,

was fanciful—she could not have been otherwise; and so, gently as she treated her partners at the village dancing-school, she thought them all sadly unlike the courtly Sir Charles Grandison and the stately Lord Mortimer; and she set down this world of reality to be a marvelously "flat, stale and unprofitable" place to live in, and life itself, without a handsome and rich lover, to be a very dull story founded upon fact.

THE MESSENGER—THE NOVEL-READERS.

It was evening. The ground was covered with snow, and the last rays of the setting sun lit up into blazing splendor the icicles pendant from the pine trees that crowned the hills surrounding Brotherton Hall. In a quaint old wainscoted parlor, before a blazing hickory fire, sat Mrs. Brotherton and Sybil. The old lady was employed in knotting a valance, the young one in tambouring a muslin apron. Before them stood a little, round, spider-legged tea-table, covered with a damask cloth and set out with a service of grotesque old China.

"It is growing dusky, my dear child; ring for Broom to bring in the lights," said Mrs. Brotherton, as she rolled up her valance, and put it in her basket.

Sybil complied by putting away her own work and ringing a little silver hand-bell that stood upon the table. There were no bell wires running through the house, like nerves through a human body, in those days, reader.

The door opened, and, in answer to the summons, an old, gray-haired domestic appeared with a candle in each hand. "Making a reverence" as he entered, he sat the light upon the table, saying, as he did so:

"Madam, a man from Colonel John Henry Hines is waiting without. He brings a message for you."

"Bring him in, Broom."

"Yes, madam," and, with a second obeisance, the old man left the room.

There was this peculiarity about Mrs. Brotherton and her household, that, from a limited intercourse with the world, and a familiar acquaintance with stately old dramas and novels of the last century, the old lady had acquired a somewhat stiff and courtly manner of speaking and acting, except when thrown off her guard by strong feeling. This stately manner was particularly admired by her two old servants, Katy and Broom, who copied it upon all possible occasions.

"Sarvint, madam—sarvint, miss," bowed the smart footman of Colonel Hines, as he entered the presence of the ladies.

"I understand you bear a message from Colonel Hines," said Mrs. Brotherton.

"Yes, madam; Colonel John Henry sends his 'spects, and says, with your permission, he will do himself the honor of calling, with his sister, in his carriage, to take Miss Brotherton to the ball to-morrow evening."

"Convey my grateful acknowledgments to Colonel

Hines, and inform him that I shall be pleased to consign Miss Brotherton to his guardianship for the evening."

Overawed by the dignity and bewildered by the eloquence of the old lady, the man bowed and left the room, followed by Broom.

"Broom!" said he, "what the old 'oman mean by that? She going to let the gal go?"

"Mr. Trimble!" said Broom, drawing himself up stiffly, "in de first place, my name is Mr. Broomley, and not Broom; my lady is Madam Brotherton, and no old woman; and my young lady is Miss Brotherton of Brotherton Hall, and no gal."

"Well, then, but what am I to tell the colonel? That she is going to let the gal—I mean the young lady—go?"

"Bress your stupidity, Mrs. Brotherton is pleased to 'sign Miss Brotherton to his garden for the evening."

"'Fore the Lord, I don't know what that is; but I shall tell Colonel Hines that she is going to let the gal go."

"Look here, you man in livery, you green and yellow poll parrot, if you call Miss Brotherton a gal again, I'll cane you; so be off with the message, now," said old Broom, flourishing his blackthorn stick.

The man went his way, and old Broom went into the kitchen to carry in tea. Having set supper upon the

table, and seen the ladies seated, he took his stand behind the chair of Mrs. Brotherton.

"There, you may leave the room now, Broom. If we should need anything, Miss Brotherton will ring."

The old man went out.

"Now, my dear Sybil," said the old lady, "but for the kind attention of Colonel Hines, I should not permit you to attend this ball, for I do not wish the face of my granddaughter to be seen too often at these village balls."

"Indeed, dear grandmother, if Colonel Hines is to attend me there, I would rather not go."

"And why, my dear? What objections have you to Colonel Hines? Is he not very polite and attentive?"

"Yes, madam, oppressively so."

"Then permit me to inform you that the attentions of Colonel Hines are a distinguished honor, even to Miss Brotherton."

"Yet, indeed, dear grandmother, I would fain dispense with the honor."

"Explain your antipathy, if you please, Sybil."

"Why, in the first place, dear grandmother, he is quite an old gentleman, near thirty, is he not?"

"Colonel Hines is forty-seven years of age—quite in the noon of life."

"And I, in the morning twilight," said Sybil, sadly.

"Any other objection, Sybil?"

"Then he is short and thick, and has a broad, red face, and a bald head, and a big—that is, a large—I mean a stout—in a word, he is a round, old gentleman, who gets into a great heat when he dances——"

"Miss Brotherton, I am shocked, I am humiliated, at your language," said the old lady, trying to look severely at her pet. "Now, do me the favor to ring for Broom to remove the tea equipage."

When the table was cleared and the fire replenished—

"Now, Broom," said Mrs. Brotherton, "bring in the box of books that last arrived from Baltimore and open it." The box was brought in and the lid forced off, and the wealth of entertainment displayed, all in handsome bindings.

Old Broom was on his knee at the box, officiating as gentleman usher to the books.

"There, Broom, hand me that book in red—ah! 'The Romance of the Forest.'"

"Oh, grandmother! let us read that—that must be very interesting."

"Here, my child, take it," said the old lady, forgetting the displeasure. "Hand me those others, Broom—'The Bandit's Bride,' ah! ha!"

"Oh, grandmother! That! that! Let's read that to-night!"

"Stay, my love; let us look further. You are too excitable," said the old lady, continuing her examination with intense interest. "'The Young Protector,' 'The Royal Captives,' 'The Children of the Abbey'——"

"Indeed! Oh, grandmother! that! that! We've heard so much about that—do let's read that to-night."

"Very well, then, my dear, lay it by. Here, Broom, take these books upstairs and put them in the bookcase, and then go and tell Katy to bring in half a dozen eggs and a bottle of port. We will have some mulled wine before we retire to rest, darling," said she in a low voice to Sybil. "And then, Broom, if you and Katy wish, you can come in and listen to the reading." Much pleased, the old man hastened to execute his mission. Now, do not think, gentle reader, that there was any inconsistency between Mrs. Brotherton's pride and her practice of admitting her old domestics to her evening readings. Her people, as she called them, had grown up with her—they were old and tried servants, perfectly faithful and respectful. And she had long observed with what greedy ears they would linger in the room and listen while she read.

Well, old Katy soon brought in her knitting, and old

Broom followed her with his cards and wool, and one sat on a low seat in one corner of the fireplace and the other on a cricket in the opposite corner, quiet, attentive and pleased. Mrs. Brotherton and Sybil sat before the fire with a workstand between them, upon which stood a brightly burning lamp, workbasket, scissors, snuffers, etc. The old lady wiped her spectacles, put them on, opened her book, and commenced reading, amid profound silence, to most attentive and interested auditors. Sybil employed herself with her tambour frame. When Mrs. Brotherton grew weary of reading aloud, she would pass the book to Sybil, and take up her knotting. Miss Brotherton would then lay aside her work and read for an hour; and in that way they would agreeably relieve each other until it was time to retire to rest. Then old Broom would mull the wine, lay the cloth, and set out a few light sponge-cakes. After Mrs. Brotherton and Sybil had partaken of the refreshments, the remainder was carried into the kitchen for the solace of the old servants. Family prayer concluded the evening, and the little circle separated for the night.

THE BALL AND THE BEAUX.

The next day was a busy one with Mrs. Brotherton and Sybil. At length, at seven o'clock, Miss Brotherton was arrayed for the festival. As I have never minutely described Sybil Brotherton, I had better do it now, while she is in her "best bib and tucker," when Katy declared she "looked like any angel" (angels don't wear white satin, mechlin lace and pearls, Katy). Sybil Brotherton was rather below the middle stature, with a slender frame, yet full formed, with rounded and tapering limbs, and a grace so natural that every movement expressed the poetry of motion. Her forehead was broad, high and white; her eyes large, clear and blue; her lips full, glowing and beautiful. Her complexion was of that delicate and transparent white so seldom seen except in consumptives, and in her cheeks was burning that fire of death that so resembles the rich rose of health. Her dark brown hair fell in long and shining ringlets upon her graceful neck and rounded bosom. Her pure and delicate beauty was set off to advantage by the rich dress of white satin and mechlin lace, and the bandeau of pearls contrasted well with her dark hair. The carriage of Colonel

Hines drew up before the door at eight o'clock, and Sybil, carefully wrapped in her velvet mantle and hood, was handed in and driven off. On the morning after the ball Mrs. Brotherton and Sybil were seated at breakfast, when the former said:

"You must now tell me, darling, whom you saw at the ball, and who were your partners in the dance."

"Well, dear grandmother, there was the same old set. The Etheringtons, and the Somervilles, and the Kinlocks, and the—oh! by the way, Hector Kinlock presented the Hon. Meredith Mills, one of our Representatives in Congress. He is from the lower part of the county, but he has purchased Blocksley Place, and is coming to reside in this neighborhood."

"Ah! Meredith Mills. What sort of a person is he, my dear?"

"Why, he is a young, talented—I rather think, agreeable—and—not married, grandma, if you mean that," said Sybil, with a sly smile.

"I am sorry to see you rather disposed to levity, my dear Sybil; pray, avoid it. Meredith Mills—the name is familiar. Oh, yes! certainly, I know the family; a very old family, originally from Lincolnshire; came over with the Calverts; certainly, the Mills' of Meredith Place; and

coming to live in our neighborhood; and not married——"

"And very much smitten with Sybil Brotherton, and coming to see her this morning."

"Sybil!" exclaimed the old lady, gravely looking over the top of her spectacles.

"My dear grandmother, you know one must be merry the day after a ball, if they are not fatigued."

"And is Mr. Mills coming here this morning?"

"He said that he would do himself the honor of calling on us this morning."

"And what did you reply?"

"Why, that Mrs. Brotherton would be happy to receive him."

"That was correct. Did you form any other new acquaintances, Sybil?"

"N—n—o, madam, none except——"

"Except whom?"

"Nobody, in fact, but——"

"But whom?"

"But a young gentleman who came with Mr. Mills."

"And who was he?"

"A young artist."

"Humph! you are reserved, Sybil. What was his name?"

"Middleton."

"And he was very agreeable."

"Dear grandmother, I never said so."

"And you were very much pleased with him."

"Dear grandmother! pleased with a gentleman at the first interview! I thought you had a better opinion of me."

The old lady smiled.

"Oh! a gentleman, was he? I thought you said he was a painter."

"An artist, grandmother, an artist; and surely an artist is a gentleman, if any man is."

"Humph! that depends upon whether he paints for money or amusement. But I shall not in future trust you to the care of any one. When I cannot attend you myself to public places, you must remain at home."

They were interrupted by a knock at the hall door and the entrance of old Broom, who informed the ladies that two gentlemen, Mr. Mills and Mr. Middleton, had called and were waiting in the drawing-room.

"Go in and see them, my dear Sybil. I will come presently," said Mrs. Brotherton.

As Sybil entered the drawing-room, Mr. Middleton

advanced and led her to a seat with the courtly grace of "sixty years since," hoping that Miss Brotherton had suffered no inconvenience from the fatigue of the preceding evening, or from the ride through the night air.

Miss Brotherton had suffered no inconvenience and was much obliged.

Sybil then addressed herself to Mr. Mills, and trusted that he would find the neighborhood pleasant and the neighbors agreeable.

Mr. Mills was pleased with the neighborhood, and anticipated much pleasure from a more intimate acquaintance with its residents.

At this moment the door opened, and Mrs. Brotherton entered. Both gentlemen arose from their seats, and Sybil named Mr. Mills—Mr. Middleton—Mrs. Brotherton. The latter gentleman met Mrs. Brotherton, led her to the sofa, and took a seat near her. Mrs. Brotherton expressed to Mr. Middleton her gratification at forming his acquaintance. Mr. Middleton bowed reverently, and expressed his deep sense of the honor conferred upon him. The conversation then became general. Mr. Middleton quite won the heart of Mrs. Brotherton by descanting upon the beauties of Brotherton Hall, its antique look, its picturesque situation, its pleasant locality, etc. Mrs. Brotherton, in acknowledgment, begged that he

would frequently honor the Hall with his presence. All this time Miss Brotherton was trying to amuse the Hon. Meredith Mills, and was in no small degree astonished and pleased at the wondrous penchant her grandmother had conceived for "the portrait painter." The problem was soon solved. The gentlemen arose to take leave, Madam Brotherton hoped they would soon repeat their visit. The gentlemen declared that they should feel so happy in accepting her invitation, and they bowed themselves out. When the sound of their horses' feet had died away—

"Well! what do you think of our visitors, grandma?" asked Sybil, gayly.

"Why, my dear Sybil, I think Mr. Meredith Mills a remarkably handsome, intellectual and polished young gentleman. Of Mr. Middleton, I had not much opportunity of judging. He, as I regretted to see, had his attention entirely engrossed by yourself during the whole time of his visit. One thing, however, did strike me. I never saw a fairer illustration of the fact that good blood will show itself through all disguises. Now, observe—those two men—they were both equally well dressed, perhaps equally well educated, and received in the same society; but now observe the difference. In Mr. Meredith Mills you saw the high-bred air of a gentleman of family;

in Mr. Middleton was equally visible the *mauvaise honte* of a low person. Mr. Mills was easy, graceful and conversable; Mr. Middleton shy, awkward and embarrassed. I never saw a fairer illustration of high-bred aristocracy and of upstart vulgarity."

Sybil listened to this disquisition with eyes and lips wide open with astonishment.

"Why, my dear grandmother!" said she; "are you not under a mistake? Which of the gentlemen did you suppose to be Mr. Mills?"

"Why, of course, the Hon. Meredith Mills was the gentleman who conversed with me, while you were so much occupied with the other young person."

A smile flashed into the eyes and curled around the lips of Sybil for an instant, and vanished, as she said, seriously:

"My dear grandmother, it's all owing to my awkward presentation, I suppose; but you have made the most amusing mistake. The tall, handsome, graceful, accomplished and high-bred man, who led you to the sofa, and who charmed you so much by his intellectual conversation, and whom you have so highly approved and praised, was Harold Middleton, the portrait painter; and the little, drab-colored gentleman in light hair and a gray coat, was the Hon. Meredith Mills, of Meredith Place."

"I hope you do not jest with me, Miss Brotherton," said the old lady, looking curiously, between surprise, pique and embarrassment.

"Or rather, you hope I do jest, dear grandmother; but I speak truth. However, your rule, I suppose, still holds good. This is but an exception."

The old lady seemed consoled, and remarked, with a smile:

"There is one thing, however, that pleases me, my dear Sybil. It is, that you kept that young man, Middleton, at a proper distance, while you showed fitting respect for Mr. Meredith Mills."

Sybil smiled, but there was something sad, almost remorseful, in her smile.

"MY GRANDFATHER, LORD MAINWARING."

A few weeks passed away. Sybil met young Middleton often in society. Indeed, he even came often to the house, where Mrs. Brotherton, in consideration of the pressing invitation extended to him on his first visit, continued to treat him with civility, if, indeed, the charming manners of the young man had not put it out of her power to treat him otherwise. Then, his unembarrassed manner to Miss Brotherton led off the suspicion that his affections were interested in her. The following circumstance opened the eyes of Mrs. Brotherton to the real position of the parties.

Colonel Hines had proposed for the hand of Miss Brotherton; Mrs. Brotherton had made known his wishes to her granddaughter, who received the news of the revival and pressing of the obnoxious suit with so much agitation and distress, that Mrs. Brotherton perceived that her heart was no longer free, and, by her questions, soon ascertained who had become its master. Upon the same evening it happened that young Middleton called, and was received by Mrs. Brotherton alone and coldly. Sybil was weeping in her own room. Young Middleton,

perceiving the change in her manner, suspected the truth, for he had become well acquainted with the old lady's foible. He therefore soon arose to take his leave, remarking, as he did so:

"This is probably the last opportunity I shall have of paying my *devoirs* to the ladies of Brotherton Hall; for my grandfather, the Earl of Mainwaring, has written to command my immediate return to England."

"Sir! did I hear aright? Your grandfather, the Earl of Mainwaring!" exclaimed the old lady, thrown off her guard.

"Yes, madam," said young Middleton, quietly. "Permit me to wish you a good-evening. Pray, present my most respectful regards to Miss Brotherton. Good-evening, madam."

"No, no; do not go yet. You must take leave of Sybil —and—pray, do me the favor to touch the bell. Perhaps you would take some refreshments."

The young man complied with her request, and—

"Broom!" said she to the old servant, who answered the summons, "go and give my compliments to Miss Brotherton, and ask her why she keeps us waiting thus, and desire her to come down; and, Broom, serve refreshments. Mr. Middleton has ridden far, and would like something. Mr. Middleton, do be seated."

A sinister smile flitted across the young man's countenance as he sat down. Greatly wondering at the summons, Sybil entered the room, followed by Broom with refreshments. The young man's hurry seemed now to have evaporated, as, eventually, did the strong necessity for his going to England. It was late when he left the house. Sybil pleaded fatigue, and retired soon to bed. Many a fine aerial castle did Mrs. Brotherton build that evening for her pet.

"Humph! indeed!" soliloquized the old lady, as she walked restlessly about her chamber floor. "Who would have thought it? Lord Mainwaring! I wonder whether young Middleton's father is the eldest son of the earl, the heir to his titles and estates? I should like so much to know. Dear me! the Earl of Mainwaring! The Earl and Countess of Mainwaring! Lord and Lady Mainwaring! I will go to England with them—my granddaughter, Lady Mainwaring!" said the old lady, ringing all the changes on the coveted title. "I must have a wedding. I will get Otto, the great Baltimore confectioner, and Sampson, the French cook, to provide the breakfast. Then we must go to Baltimore ourselves and speak to Madame Modiste to furnish the bridal dress and veil, and we must consult her upon the trousseau generally——" and, "Countess of Mainwaring!" muttered the old lady,

as she sank to sleep that night. "How well a coronet will grace that angel brow!"

"God help old madam!" said Katy to Broom that night at the kitchen fire; "she has been talking to herself all the evening."

Young Middleton's return to England was indefinitely postponed, and, before the trees had put forth their leaves or the snow was melted off the ground, Sybil Brotherton was the wife of Harold Middleton. The young couple, much to the comfort of Mrs. Brotherton, had concluded to spend the first year of their married life at Brotherton Hall. Mrs. Brotherton had ascertained that the father of her son-in-law was the third son of Lord Mainwaring, and that at least three persons stood between him and the earl's coronet. But at least he was the grandson of a peer, and that was much.

THE YOUNG WIFE.

How soon was the sweet dream of Sybil broken! How soon the beautiful illusion of Sybil dispelled! How soon "the veiled prophet" of her idolatry stood forth in all his hideous deformity! A few months after their marriage Harold Middleton began to absent himself from his young wife all day, and sometimes all night. The playful and loving expostulations of Sybil were kindly taken at first, and explanations, which she received with confiding affection, were given of his absence. But even this disguise was at last thrown off.

About twelve months after her marriage Sybil was sitting reading with her grandmother in their little parlor. Earlier than usual the old lady complained of fatigue and drowsiness and retired to rest. Sybil did not seek her chamber, but, desiring Broom to bring some refreshments, and sending Katy to her chamber for his dressing-gown and slippers, she drew her chair to the fire to await the coming of her husband. She could not read; she laid her book down; her very face breathed joy. Sybil had ascertained that she would become a mother, and, with the confiding love of a young wife, she

wished to make her husband a sharer of her joy. Long did Sybil wait, but not impatiently, for her face was still beaming with gentle happiness, when the sound of a horse's feet, followed by an impatient rap at the door, caused her to start joyfully up and go to open it herself, exclaiming, as she met her husband:

"Oh, dear, Harold! how glad I am that you have come at last! I have been waiting so long for you!"

Repulsing her offered caress, he said, sternly and angrily:

"I have before this intimated my desire that you should retire to rest at your usual hour, instead of sitting up for me, Mrs. Middleton. Do not give me occasion to repeat the injunction."

A woman of more spirit would have resented this; a woman of less sensibility might not have felt it. Poor Sybil! from the very manner of her education, as well as from her native temperament, was the victim of a morbid sensibility. This was the first occasion upon which Middleton had spoken unkindly to her, and she felt it deeply. Pale and trembling, she sank into her seat; Middleton threw himself upon the sofa. The coffee grew cold, the oysters became turbid in their liquor, the candles burned low, the fire died out, and Sybil's sweet news remained untold. Silent tears were stealing down her

cheeks. This seemed rather to harden the heart of her husband, who now said, sternly:

"This course of conduct looks very like a willful disregard of my wishes, Mrs. Middleton. Perhaps they were not explained with sufficient clearness?"

Sybil started as the first angry tones of his voice fell upon her ears, then, looking into his face with an expression of distressing inquiry, and meeting nothing there but sullen anger, she arose from her seat, and, taking her night-lamp, was about to leave the room. Seeming to take a second thought when she reached the door, she turned back, and, setting down her lamp, approached her husband, and putting her arms around his neck and pressing her lips upon his brow, she murmured:

"Do not be angry with me, dear Harold. I will not stay up for you another time, if you will love me now."

This caress was received in sullen silence, and not returned. The gentle words of Sybil remained unnoticed. Unclasping her arms, after a few moments she withdrew to her chamber and sought her pillow, where, like a child as she was, she soon wept herself to sleep.

"A poor, pale, whining creature," muttered Middleton, looking after his wife as she left the room. "If I had known that this old place was in chancery, I would have seen her in Jericho before I would have married her.

Strange! that I never happened to hear it until to-night. And you, Inez! my bright, my beautiful, my dark-browed girl of Italy! Was it for this I cast you away? No matter; fetters not riveted with gold fall easily from my wrists, bright Inez! And if this property should slip from its present possessers——"

Middleton fell into a deep reverie, so that it was near morning when he retired to his chamber.

A few months passed, and the case in chancery was decided against the Brothertons, and a suit entered to eject them from the premises. From this time the mask of hypocrisy assumed by Middleton, and which had occasionally slipped aside, was now laid by forever. With what funds he could wrest from his gentle wife, or, through her from Mrs. Brotherton, he would frequent L——, the county seat, and spend whole days and nights in dissipation. Sybil grew pale and melancholy, and, having lost all esteem and respect for her husband, took no further comfort in her love; and, indeed, with her delicate health and timid temper, she generally felt rather relieved when, after she had given him all the money she could raise, he would take himself off for a week, for then she felt secure, at least, from personal violence and danger to herself and her unborn babe; for, alas! Sybil Middleton, the delicate, the sensitive, and the refined, had

felt the weight of her husband's hand in anger, had trembled for her life in his presence. But these scenes of violence would generally occur after Middleton had been drinking freely. And Sybil had another sorrow; she perceived, with grief and dismay, that her beloved grandmother was falling into premature dotage. The trials of the old lady's age had been too great for her to bear. The loss of the Brotherton estate, the unworthiness of her son-in-law, the misery of her darling granddaughter, and the prospective ejectment from the home of her youth, all pressed upon the old lady's mind, and at length broke it down.

THE YOUNG MOTHER.

"Stay with me to-night, dear Harold; I am ill, and I am frightened. Stay with me to-night," pleaded Sybil, timidly taking the hand of her husband as he was about to leave the house.

"I am not a physician, Mrs. Middleton," replied he, coldly.

"Yet you are more to me—the only one who can give me comfort and strength in my coming trial. I am weak and fearful. I know I am a fool, yet bear with me awhile, and—stay with me to-night."

"You have your grandmother with you."

"Alas! my poor grandmother! she herself needs care and attention. She is incapable of giving me comfort. Oh! do not leave me!" exclaimed she, suddenly, catching his hand, as he was about to go. "Stay with me to-night."

"You are importunate, Mrs. Middleton," said he, releasing himself; "and I regret to say that I cannot comply with your request. Good-evening." And he left the room.

Sybil turned aside to weep, but wiped her tears hastily

way, as she perceived her poor grandmother totter into the room.

"Weeping again, Sybil, my poor child?" said the old lady, sinking into a chair and holding out her arms to her granddaughter. "Come to my bosom, my dear child. What is your grief, Sybil?"

"Nothing, my dear grandmother, only I am not very well," said Mrs. Middleton, pleased, yet wondering at the temporary revival of the old lady's intellect.

"No, my poor child; you are far from well. I see that. You must go to bed, Sybil, and I will send for a physician. Katy! tell Broom to saddle a horse and ride over to Dr. Hall's, and ask him to come over directly; that Mrs. Middleton is ill; and, Katy, do you carry an armful of wood up into your young lady's chamber. Lean on me, my dear Sybil, and come upstairs."

Lean on her! Poor old trembler! There was something inexpressibly touching in her protection of Sybil, while she herself so much needed support.

Mrs. Middleton gained her room and was assisted to bed. Mrs. Brotherton took her seat in a large arm-chair by her side. Sybil repressed her complaints, that she might not give pain to the tender-hearted old lady. The physician lived ten miles off; the night was far advanced, and he had not yet arrived. Sybil lay perfectly

quiet and silent, except when she would entreat her grandmother to go to rest, and leave old Katy to watch.

"No, no, darling; no, no, my poor child," would be the old lady's answer.

Sybil at last said:

"Dear grandmother, I would like to go to sleep, but I cannot sleep while I see you there. Will you not retire to bed?"

"Are you better, then, my love? I am so glad! Well, as soon as I see you asleep, I will go!"

"Good-night, then, dear grandmother!"

"God bless you, darling!"

Sybil closed her eyes and affected to sleep. After a few moments the old lady arose and looked over her, but she could not see by the dim light of the taper the corrugated brow and the clenched hands of the sufferer.

"She is asleep!" murmured the old lady. "Bless her, poor thing, I was afraid she was going to be sick." And she glided from the room, telling Katy that she would dispense with her services for that night, and charging her to sleep by the bedside of her young lady, in case she should need anything.

In an hour after, Sybil Middleton pressed her first-born child to her bosom.

"Thank God for my beautiful boy! Thank God for

my spared life!" fervently exclaimed the exhausted mother, as she received the babe in her arms.

"Now, my dear young lady, as you are comfortable, hadn't I better wake madam?"

"No, Katy; let her sleep, and I must rest now. How proud Harold will be of his son! How happy poor grandmother will feel that my trial is safely over!" was the last thought of Sybil, as she sank to rest.

"Oh! my dear young lady! my dear young lady!" exclaimed old Katy, bursting into the chamber of Mrs. Middleton at early dawn.

"Why, what is the matter, Katy?" inquired Sybil, in affright.

"Your poor grandmother! Your good old grandmother!"

"Katy! what is the matter? What of my dear grandmother?"

"Dead in her bed! dead in her bed!"

With a smothered shriek, Sybil fell back on her pillow.

Old Broom, who, unable to find the doctor, had returned late at night, was dispatched to Colonel Hines'. The colonel and his sister quickly obeyed the summons, and hastened to Brotherton Hall. The family physician also arrived early in the morning, and a messenger was

dispatched to Mr. Middleton, at L——. In the meantime, Colonel Hines and his sister Rachel took the direction of affairs; and truly the kind offices of these good Samaritans were needed, for Mrs. Brotherton had expired during the night in a fit of apoplexy, and Mrs. Middleton was lying extremely ill and delirious. Mr. Middleton returned late in the evening. On the fourth day from her decease, the funeral of Mrs. Brotherton took place. It was attended by all the gentry of the neighborhood. The wild delirium of Mrs. Middleton had been subdued, but she lay in a stupor, insensible to all that was passing around her. Miss Rachel Hines kindly volunteered to remain at Brotherton Hall to nurse the invalid.

At length Sybil was raised from her bed of illness, and, in a fortnight from the day on which she first sat up, she left her room. Miss Rachel Hines had returned home. It was evening, and Sybil said to herself:

"I will surprise Harold, and please him, by joining him at tea."

And wrapping her shawl around her, she descended to the parlor. Old Broom was just setting tea upon the table as she entered. In answer to her inquiry, the old man told her that Mr. Middleton was talking with a

strange man in the entry. Desiring Katy to go up and remain with her infant, and telling Broom to be in waiting upon the table, Sybil took her seat. Middleton entered, and, as he sat down in his place, remarked:

"I am glad to see you out of your chamber, Sybil, for we shall be obliged to get out of the house very soon."

"As you please, dear Harold. I am ready to accompany you, when and where you please."

Harold Middleton smiled darkly.

"But it is not as I please, Mrs. Middleton. Let me tell you, it is far more easy to get rid of one handsome establishment than to find another."

Not comprehending the cause of his ill-humor, but seeing from his inflamed face that he had been drinking, Sybil answered gently and soothingly:

"Dearest Harold, believe me, I am willing to do just as you see fit. I had as lieve remain here as go elsewhere, if you prefer it."

"You are dull, Mrs. Middleton; you do not seem to comprehend that a writ of ejectment has been served upon us, and that we must go."

"Oh! it is sad, indeed, to leave our home upon compulsion. But, dearest Harold, do not call me Mrs. Mid-

dleton, and speak so coldly to me. You know I have no one to love me now but you."

"You are irritable, and not very agreeable, this evening, Mrs. Middleton. I think you have left your chamber too soon; I advise you to return to it."

Sybil left the room.

On the morning succeeding this conversation, Middleton left home for Baltimore, and was absent about a week. At the end of that time he returned, and, entering the parlor, where his wife sat at work, informed her that he had received a letter from his father requiring his immediate presence in London to attend a lawsuit; and that he should go in the next packet, which would sail in two weeks.

"Very well, dear Harold, we must make some provision for the two poor old people in the kitchen, and I shall be so glad to go. I like the arrangement very much. I shall be delighted to cross the ocean, and so happy, so very happy, to know your father and mother. I shall find parents again in them; and they will be so pleased, will they not, to see our babe, their grandchild? Oh! yes; I shall be quite ready in a week."

"Well! have you done, Sybil?"

Sybil raised her large, tender eyes to his countenance with an inquiring glance, and remained silent.

"I never contemplated taking you to England, Sybil; at least when I go. I do not, indeed, know how you would be received by my family. It will take, I fear, some considerable diplomacy to reconcile my father to this somewhat inconsiderate marriage of mine."

The blood rushed to the face of Sybil, and the tears to her eyes; to conceal which, she stooped and raised her babe from the cradle.

"But this is my design. I will attend promptly my father's summons; meet him in London, and, after the hurry of business is over, I will endeavor to reconcile him to our marriage, then send or come for you and the child."

Mrs. Middleton was reassured by his words, especially as his manner was kinder than usual, and he had called her "Sybil" through the conversation. She inquired:

"And how long will it be, dear Harold, before you send?"

"Oh! in a few months from this—in the fall, probably; and, in the mean time, I will take a house for you in Baltimore for the summer."

"It seems a long time until the fall; but then I suppose I am weak to feel so," said Sybil, repressing a sigh.

The next few days were employed in selling off the fur-

niture and plate at Brotherton Hall. A few family portraits and some pieces of old-fashioned furniture were reserved for the use of Mrs. Middleton during the summer.

Two weeks from this time, Sybil found herself the occupant of a small cottage in the suburbs of Baltimore. Katy was retained in her service, upon reduced wages; and old Broom, who had "saved a penny," went to live with some of his relations.

It was the morning of Middleton's departure. His trunks were all on board, and the packet was to sail with the first tide.

At early dawn, Middleton and Sybil stood at the cottage gate.

"And will you indeed send for me in the fall, dear Harold?" said Sybil, sadly.

"Why, certainly, Sybil; who do you doubt me?" said Middleton, smilingly.

"I do not doubt you, but I love to hear you promise again and again."

"Well, I must be gone; farewell, Sybil."

"Good-by! good-by! Oh, come back; let me take a long, long look into your eyes—a look that will last me till we meet——"

"Well! will that do, Sybil? There—there—I must go. Be cheerful; farewell. I will send for you soon."

And they parted; he with a lie on his lips, rejoicing in his release; she to her lonely hearth, profoundly grateful for his seeming kindness, and building many bright hopes upon his faithless promises.

KATY'S MISHAPS IN THE CITY.

The leaves were falling, and the cold northwest wind was blowing them in drifts about the cottage of Mrs. Middleton. Old Katy was roaming about the garden, gathering sticks to make a fire; in the course of her gleaning, she passed into the front yard. Seeing the figure of an old man leaning on a stick at the gate, she dropped her bundle and hastened forward, joyfully, exclaiming:

"Lor' a' mercy upon me, Broom! Is this you? Is this you? Bless your ole soul, I am so glad to see you once again in this worl'! Come in, come in; how have you been in this long time?"

"Thanky, Katy, thanky; I'm so-so, 'cept the rheumatics, and the phthisic, and the asthma and lumbago, and the liver complaint, and the consumption, except that, I enjoys pretty good health in general."

"'Deed! I'm glad to hear you're so hearty. It's more than I am; I'm trouble with a stiff neck."

"Yes! you were always stiff-necked, Katy."

Now, Broom, that was a libel on Katy.

"Well, Katy, how is the young madam and the little child, and when is she going to foreign parts?"

"Ah! poor dear child! I think she's in a 'sumption, Broom. She used to be purty as a picter, Broom; now she's all pale and thin, and her eyes are hollow. She's never hearn a word from that vilyun (God forgive me) that she married. She's gone to the pos' office now, poor dear heart, to see if there's a letter for her. She seen in a newspaper how the ship that he went out in has comed back, and so she's gone. But come in, Broom, out o' the cold; you shall see the child, poor little cretur, by the kitchen fire—no! by the kitchen fireplace—no fire there! Dunno when there will be."

"Why, you don't go to make out how the young madam wants for anything, do you?"

"Don't want for nothing, don't she? I tell you, Broom, that vilyun (mercy on me) never left her a single dollar—made out he'd want all the money to carry him to foreign parts. I know, 'cause, you see, she wanted tea and sugar the day after he went away; and so she sent her silver spoons to be sold—sent 'em by me; and by the same token, the silversmiff where I took them took the spoons away from me, and sent for a cons'able, and had me 'rested on 'spicion of stealing them; yes! and 'rested me there all day, till the young lady could be sent for. Lor', Broom, how my feelings were hurted that day! that ever

Catherine Ann Gallagher should be 'rested for stealin' silver spoons! You don't know how I was hurt!"

"I can 'magine, Katy; I can 'magine. You know, though, you used to hear the ole madam say, as none of the people in cities ever come ober with Lord Baltimore, so how can you 'spect better from them?"

"Well, I was going to tell you, Broom—but come in out of the wind—there's the baby! The very image of the old madam, aint he? There! don't wake him; sit down. I was a-going to tell you, that after that, the young madam always wrote a line when she sent me to sell anything; and she sold almost all the silver she had, to buy things and pay rent; for only think, Broom, people here have to pay for living in houses!"

"Pshaw! I could have told you that long ago."

"I didn't know it. Well, there's nothing left to sell, now, but the blade of the butter knife and her thimble—that's silver, I mean; and what we are to do, now the winter's setting in, the Lord knows. We been living on black tea and rye bread all this summer. The poor child wanted me to go hire out where I could get wages and better living; but no, I says; if I've got a black skin, I've got a white soul; and I ain't a-going to 'sert her in her 'fliction."

"No, no more I wouldn't, Katy. Dear, dear, dear,"

sighed the old man; "this is very 'stressing, very. But couldn't the young lady teach the pianner, or paint picters, or diskiver some rich relations, like the 'stressed ladies in the story books, she used to read to us about?"

"Well, I often thinks o' that myself; and I thinks, what's the good o' larnin' unless it helps people to get along in the world. But, poor thing! her mind is 'sturbed enough. Sometimes she does walk about a whole day, looking for needlework; but she is a stranger, and gets no luck, and she comes home, and mopes, and mopes. I 'vises her to smoke a pipe; but she won't take 'vice. I tells her, if it hadn't a been for smoking a pipe, I should have gone ravin' 'stracted mad, when Colonel Hines (Heaven forgive him) sold my poor, dear gal to Georgy. My poor gal! my poor gal; your poor, old mother will never see you again in this world. My poor, dear gal! all the child I had in the world!" Here the poor, old soul lost recollection of everything but her own sorrow, and sobbed hysterically.

"Don't cry, Katy! don't cry! that's a good 'oman!"

"Hush, Broom, hush! you never had no child sold away from you."

"No, Katy, because my wife was sold away from me the first year we were married, and I never had the heart to marry again."

"My poor gal! my poor child!"

"Come, Katy, don't take on so; don't, that's a dove!"

When the old creature had exhausted herself with weeping, she wiped her eyes. Then Broom said to her:

"You never told me, Katy, how it was that you were free and your child a slave."

"Why, you see, Broom, I was left to Colonel Hines by his uncle, but I was left to be free at twenty-five; and I had my little gal before I had served my time out, and so she was a slave. I had been living with Mrs. Brotherton ever since I was ten years old, and I was there when my poor gal was sold. She tried to prevent it, but couldn't. You were gone with Colonel Brotherton to the wars then. Don't ask me any more, please, Broom;" and the old creature fell to weeping again. At last, wiping her eyes, she said:

"Well! well! well! well! may be it will all come right in another world. Give me that bundle of chips, Broom; I must make a cup of tea for Mrs. Middleton, against she comes. I wish I had a little wood, to make a fire in her room."

"Now, you stop, old 'oman. How long before she'll be back?"

"An hour or so."

"Well!" said the old man, brightening up, "I'll just tell

you what I goin' to do. I goin' after a load of wood and a basket of good things; and I'll just have 'em brought home, and don't you let on who sent them, 'cause the young lady might feel bad at 'ceiving a favor from the likes o' me, 'cause that's a little worser than anything we ever heard about in the books at night."

The old man was as good as his word. In an hour a blazing fire was kindled in Sybil's room, and the tea-table spread with nice white bread and fresh butter, while a pot of fragrant hyson was drawing on the hearth. The babe was awake, sitting on the carpet, blowing a whistle with great glee. At last Sybil entered, pale, languid, and weary, and, dropping into a chair, held out her arms to the babe, who crawled fast upon his hands and knees to reach her lap.

"Ah! she's got no letter," thought old Katy, as she came in to set the tea on the table.

"The silversmiff has been here, ma'am." ("Heaven forgive me for lying," muttered she to herself.)

"The silversmith, Katy?"

"Yes, ma'am; and he fotch two dollars, as he said was due on the spoons; and so I took the money, ma'am, and bought some wood and some other things (Heaven look over fibbing)."

"Very well, Katy; that was a godsend, indeed, but you left the babe to do this."

"No, ma'am; old Uncle Broom 'rived this morning, and I got him to go."

"Poor old man! Has he traveled all the way up here? Send him in to see me, Katy."

" 'Scuse me, Mrs. Middleton; but did you get a letter, ma'am?"

"No, Katy; but to-morrow I will go and see the captain of the vessel; perhaps he has a letter or a message for me."

THE CAPTAIN'S NEWS.

The next morning, after an early breakfast, Sybil put her babe to sleep, and went her way in search of the captain of the packet in which her husband had left America. In going toward the vessel, she had to pass through crowds of coarse women and rough men, whose ribaldry caused her nerves to tremble and her cheek to burn with shame. At length, finding it difficult to reach the vessel, which was lying off the shore, she inquired where the captain was likely to be found, and was directed to his lodgings in the city. She hurried thither, was so lucky as to find him at home, and was shown into his presence. He was a fat, red-faced, self-satisfied looking man, who arose to receive her with rather an insolent leer.

"You are Captain Blackston, I presume?"

"At your service, miss."

"I am Mrs. Middleton."

"Ah! I beg your pardon, ma'am."

"My husband, Mr. Harold P. Middleton, went to Liverpool in your ship about six months since. I have come to inquire whether you have any letter or message from him for me, and whether he was in good health when he landed."

"Whew!" whistled the captain.

"Will you please to tell me, sir?"

"Why, madam, here seems to be a great mystery. Mr. Middleton, certainly, was my passenger to Liverpool; but he took with him a lady whom he called Mrs. Middleton and whom I supposed to be his wife. Heavens! ma'am, don't faint here in my room!" exclaimed the captain, seizing the bell rope, and ringing an alarm.

"William!" cried he, energetically, to the man that answered the bell, "call a hackney coach for this lady."

Sybil mastered her emotion by a great effort, and entered the coach that had been called for her, for, indeed, her trembling limbs refused to convey her home. It took Sybil's last dollar, the produce of the sale of the butter knife, to pay her fare. For many days, Sybil remained almost stupefied with grief, sometimes wandering restlessly about, sometimes sitting for hours in one mournful position, sometimes catching up her infant, and weeping passionately over it. Poor old Katy was distressed almost to death, but could not guess the cause of her acute sorrow. A few weeks from this time there was an arrival from Liverpool, and a few days after, Sybil saw a letter advertised for her in the paper. Too weak to go herself, she hurried old Katy off to the office. Poor old Katy was always sure to fall into adventures, when she was sent

into the city. When she arrived at the post office, and was asked by the clerk what she wanted, she answered:

"That letter, if you please, sir."

"What letter, aunty?"

"Why, the letter from foreign parts, if you please."

"Yes; but whose letter?"

"Why, hizzen, sir, hizzen."

"What name, old woman?"

"Why, Mr. Middleton, the gentleman as went to foreign parts."

The clerk looked over his list, and answered:

"There is nothing here for Mr. Middleton."

"The letter ain't for Mr. Middleton, sir."

"For whom, then, old woman?" said the clerk, growing impatient.

"Miss Sybil that was, sir—Miss Sibyl Brotherton, of Brotherton Hall, come over with Lord Baltimore, sir," said Katy, curtsying at every clause.

"There is no letter here for Miss Brotherton."

"She's not Miss Brotherton now; she's Mrs. Middleton."

"Why, what a stupid old beast is this? Here, here is your letter."

"Thanky, sir! very kind of you, indeed, sir; thanky, kindly. I wouldn't take a golden guinea for this letter."

It was raining hard when Katy left the office, and she looked around in despair—for Katy had no umbrella. A hackney coach was standing near, and Katy looked longingly at it. Observing this, the driver said, jeeringly:

"A hack, ma'am?"

"Thank you, kindly; yes, sir, if you please."

Finding a customer, the driver changed his tone, and let down his steps, and handed the old woman in with respectful alacrity, put them up again, jumped into his seat, and drove off.

"Dear me!" said old Katy, as she sat back in the carriage. "This is very nice and comfortable—so much better than sploshing through the mud and getting wet to the skin. I love the motion of a carriage, too—it tintillates one's feelings so pleasantly. What a very polite young man, to offer me a ride—so different from other people. Ain't he got manners? I shouldn't wonder if his family didn't come over with Lord Bal'imore. What nice soft cushions!"

The end of this soliloquy brought Katy to Mrs. Middleton's door. The "very polite young man" jumped from his seat, and, letting down the steps, handed Katy out.

"I am very much obliged to you, indeed, sir, for your

kindness, sir. I'll do you a favor whenever I have a chance."

"Very well; you're quite welcome; your money is just as good as anybody's else. It's a dollar."

"Sir?"

"It's a dollar."

"What's a dollar?"

"It's a dollar you owe me for bringing you home in my hack."

"Why, you invited me to ride in your hack, I never asked you; it was your own offer, and I thank you kindly. But you're not going to charge me, now, I hopes."

"Come, that's rich."

"Good-morning; I thank you kindly; I must go in now."

"Look here, old woman; none of your nonsense; hand me that dollar."

"I shan't do no such a thing! I shan't do no such a thing! You 'vited me to take a ride, and I rid; and now I know it was all to cheat me out of a dollar."

"See here, you old devil, if you don't pay me that dollar, I'll put you in the hands of a constable for swindling."

"Now, the mercy upon me; where am I to get a dollar from?"

Words now grew so high between the belligerent parties, that the noise drew Mrs. Middleton to the door; and great was her perplexity when she understood the cause of dispute—for poor Sybil was penniless. Telling Katy she was in the wrong, and explaining to the hackman Katy's mistake, and promising to pay him the next day, Sybil separated the combatants, and, receiving her letter, she retired to read it. She opened it eagerly. There was no enclosure; and merely remarking that little Hubert would go without his flannel some time longer, she began to read. Her cheek grew pale and paler as she read, the letter dropped from her hand, and she sat as one stricken with epilepsy. Presently, the blood rushed back in torrents to her face, and, clasping her hands to her throbbing temples, she started up and paced the floor with irregular steps, exclaiming:

"Oh! the fiend! the fiend!—yet not the fiend, either, for there is something large about the devil, after all—the reptile! the reptile, rather! Coldly to tell me he does not care for me—falsely to tell me that he suspects my fidelity—to renounce his wife, to disown his child, and slander both, to color his baseness! Where sleeps the justice of God? What stays the thunderbolt, that it does not strike him down in his rampant wickedness?" And Sybil threw herself, writhing, upon the bed. The scath-

ing thunder and lightning of passion passed, and the rain fell. Sybil wept as she murmured:

"Oh, Harold! Harold! I never thought to have felt toward thee thus! I never thought to have spoken of you so!"

Sybil sat, pale, exhausted, and alarmed, at the typhoon that had passed through her gentle soul.

"Great God!" said she, "this, then, is passion! this, then, is anger! Oh, now, indeed, I know there is no need of a lake of burning fire; our bosoms may be a hell, as mine has just proved; our own passions may be tormenting fiends, if there be no others."

Sybil sank upon her knees and prayed; and from this moment may be dated the commencement of her true knowledge of God, of herself, of the value of life and the use of suffering, of the reality of another and a happier state of existence. Amid the confusion, the storm, the whirlwind of her excited passion, arose "the still small voice" that whispered, "Peace, be still," and "Be not afraid; it is I." Sybil arose from her prayer, calm, composed; prospects became clearer before her mental vision, and she thought:

"Though it is all over now with me and my husband, yet, now that I know the worst, I can bear it! I have no further thoughts of going to him. I must bestir myself

to find some means of support for myself and child. I will trust to God's blessing on my best exertions. I will work and pray; and I shall succeed, I know I shall."

With newly-inspired courage, Sybil put on her bonnet and shawl, and went to the door; but the rain, that again came down in torrents, arrested her purpose of going out.

Sybil was a good performer on the piano and harp, and she sought to obtain pupils in her art; but she was a stranger without letters of introduction, and her efforts, of course, failed of success. She then thought of writing to her relative, General Bushrod Brotherton, the successful litigant in the suit in chancery, and the present possessor of Brotherton Hall. She wrote, and, telling him of her destitution, requested him to obtain for her the testimonials of some of her former neighbors.

GENERAL BUSHROD BROTHERTON.

A week from the time she went to the post office, hoping to receive her expected packet of testimonials. Before she came home, a storm of wind and snow arose and raged with great violence. Old Katy stood at the cottage gate, looking the picture of dismay, and whispering to herself:

"Poor thing! she'll catch her death; and then all her troubles will be over!"

In the midst of Katy's lamentations, a traveling carriage drew up before the door, a servant jumped off from behind, let down the steps, and an old gentleman, with a military air, alighted and walked toward the house.

"Well! bress the Lord! if here ain't General Bushrod Brotherton himself!" exclaimed Katy, in a low voice, as she hastened to open the gate.

"Well, old woman! Katy, are you not?"

"Yes, sir—Katy, sir—yes, sir," answered the old woman, curtsying at every two words.

"She's gone out, sir; she'll soon be home, sir. Will you come in?"

General Brotherton followed the old servant into the

house, and in half an hour after, Sybil came home. Katy was on the watch for her, and, meeting her, said:

"Oh! Mrs. Middleton! who you think is here, ma'am? General Brotherton is in the house. Come round the kitchen way, to change your dress. I stole your best gown out of your room, for you to put on there."

Be it known to the reader, that there was no getting into Sybil's chamber but through the parlor; hence Katy's little piece of finesse. Sybil changed her dress quickly, and went into the parlor.

"My dear Mrs. Middleton, or my sweet cousin Sybil —if you will permit me to call you so—how pleased I am at this opportunity of making your acquaintance?" cordially exclaimed General Brotherton, advancing to meet her. General Brotherton was a tall, stout man, with a broad, rosy, good-humored face, and gray hair. Sybil was rather prepossessed with his appearance, and received him kindly and gracefully. After a little unimportant conversation, and a few remarks that led to the subject, General Brotherton observed:

"I hope, my dear little cousin Sybil, you will do me the justice to believe that I would never have molested Mrs. Brotherton in the possession of her home during her life."

"Had she lived," replied Sybil, "Mrs. Brotherton would

have acknowledged the kind intention, as I do, with deep gratitude."

"There is more I wished to say to you, my dear cousin Sybil; but I am a blunt old man, and may not know how to approach the subject with the necessary tact and delicacy, perhaps; and I may offend when I desire to please. If I do, you will forgive me, will you not, my dear cousin? Well, this is what I wished to say: First, I have received your letter, and that has brought me to town. Of that, more anon. Well, at the time my attorney entered suit for possession of the Brotherton property, I had heard that Mrs. Brotherton was dead, and that you, Sybil, had been some time married to a wild young fellow, the son of a man of wealth and family, and that you were both soon going to England. Hence the suit. But within a month, my dear cousin Sybil, I have heard another story—that my cousin's husband was an impostor and a villain; that he has left her and her child in poverty and want, excusing his base desertion by charging her with conjugal infidelity."

Sybil covered her burning face with her hands.

"Oh, Lord!" she groaned, "I did not know, I did not dream, any one but myself knew of this!"

"It is all over our neighborhood; but, of course, no one believes the wicked lie."

"You need not tell me that, sir," exclaimed Sybil, suddenly assuming the air of an outraged empress. "It is not within the wide range of possibility that my bitterest enemy, even were he the most credulous of fools, could believe such a thing! And I only wonder that any one should allude in my presence to such a story."

"There, there," muttered the general, seemingly much mortified, "I knew I should offend—I am such a rough old wretch—I blurt things out so."

His manner touched Sybil, and produced a reaction in her feelings. She hastened to say:

"Forgive me, my dear sir; much trouble has made me very irritable, and I cannot bear the least allusion to that subject."

"Very well! All's right! Now, to come to the point and purpose of my visit. He has left you—that is plain. He has taken a foreign girl out with him—one Inez—Inez de—I forget! but I heard all about it. Well! I have no nearer relation than you in the world; and if you will return with me to Brotherton Hall, and live with me and my old wife, and be our daughter, and if you will apply to the Legislature for a divorce, and have your son's name changed to that of Brotherton, I will execute a will, leaving, at my death, all the Brotherton property to you for

your lifetime, and afterward to your son. Come, Sybil, what say you?"

The vision of wealth, comfort, ease, and her child's interest, arose before her "mind's eye," her heart beat quickly, her face flushed.

"Come, my dear little cousin! what say you?"

The "still small voice" whispered the moral bearing of the question, and Sybil's heart paused in its violent beatings to listen—the flush died away from her face.

"Come, my dear Sybil, your answer."

"Will you give me a few days to think of this, my dear sir? and in the meantime believe me most grateful, most deeply grateful, for your kindness."

"Selfishness, pure selfishness, dear Sybil. My wife and I are lonesome in the old house; we want company. Think of my proposition a whole week, if you will—I don't like hasty decisions myself; but give me an answer at the end of that time. But mind, cousin Sybil, my conditions are postively unalterable—for I know very well, if one condition is not insisted upon, that just as soon as my old head is laid low, and you in possession of Brotherton Hall, that fellow would be sneaking back, and then you'd receive him. I know—oh! I know you women so well. He'd be so penitent! and you so forgiving; and in five or six years the Brotherton estate would be lost at the

faro table, and you would be beggared. Oh! I know—I know so well!" So saying, the old man took leave, entered his carriage, and was driven off.

Now, this proposition would not have tempted Sybil had a single spark of affection or esteem for her husband remained in her bosom; but it was not so. Her regard for Middleton had rather been a girlish fancy than a woman's deep affection; though, with a woman of Sybil's domestic tastes and affectionate heart, this regard would have deepened into love, had not all respect been so soon lost. It was not his dissipation, nor his brutality, nor even his desertion of her, that had alienated the heart of his wife, but the cold, fierce, determined malignity of mind—the unmixed, unredeemed, unredeemable depravity of heart manifested throughout their entire married life, but most plainly discovered in the only letter he had ever written to her. Sybil's heart, therefore, was not defended against the solicitations of self-interest and maternal love by any affection lingering there. The test of principle could, therefore, be fairly applied to her unguarded, unsupported heart.

When the old man was gone, Sybil sat down to consider. She was a stranger and friendless; her money was all spent, and her plate and jewelry all sold; her store of fuel and provisions nearly exhausted, and winter coming

on. Lastly, and worse than all, she was deficient in that spirit of enterprise and energy required to meet the difficulties of her situation. Yet her mental debate was not very long; for all her early impressions and all her religious principles were against the proposed measure. In a few hours, therefore, Sybil's mind was fully made up.

The winter set in very cold. The air was frosty and nipping; snow-clouds darkened the sky. The day on which Sybil was to give her answer to General Brotherton dawned. It was intensely cold. As Sybil arose from her bed, shrinking and shuddering from the biting air, she covered up closely her sleeping boy, saying:

"God bless thee, poor little one! You will freeze if I take you up to-day."

She passed into the parlor, where Katy was attempting to open the shutters. They were so bound with ice and blocked up with snow that it required considerable effort to push them open; and then the dreary aspect abroad, the ground deeply covered with snow; the sky, gloomily darkened with clouds, was rendered still more dreary by the severely-felt privations at home.

"My dear Miss Middleton, you're shivering from head to foot; let me go get your shawl," exclaimed Katy, with chattering teeth.

"Do, Katy. But, Katy, is there no wood left to make a fire?" asked Sybil, shuddering.

"There's one blessed long log left. I am going to split it up now. 'Deed and 'deed, Miss Middleton, if I was you, I'd take the child, and I'd go settle down on some o' my relations."

"Without an invitation, and perhaps without a welcome, either, Katy?"

"I dunno, I dunno, Miss Sybil! Cross looks don't bite like this cold."

"No, Katy, but worse; one bites the fingers and toes, but the other gnaws at the heart."

Katy made no reply, but went out, and soon returned with her arm full of split wood, of which she made a fire.

"Now, Katy, what have we for breakfast?" inquired Sybil.

"One blessed pint of flour, and one teaspoonful of black tea."

"Then, Katy, get it ready, and we will eat our last meal by our last fire."

The poor meal was scarcely over, and the table removed, before there came a knock at the door, followed by the entrance of General Brotherton, who, taking a seat at the fire, unceremoniously exclaimed:

"Oh! my dear little cousin, this is dreadful weather for

traveling; yet we'll have to venture it; for when it moderates, and this snow melts, the roads will be impassable for a fortnight. Come! can you get ready by to-morrow morning? I wrote a week ago to the old lady, to look for us to-morrow evening."

"My dear cousin," said Sybil, "you must not think me ungrateful, if I decline your kind offer."

"Decline it! Upon what ground? Upon what ground?"

"I am not able to comply with its conditions."

"Which one? which one?"

"That of the divorce."

"Oh! is that all? Yes, you can; nothing is more easy. It is only to apply to the Legislature, and——"

"Understand me, my dear sir. I cannot conscientiously take any step toward the accomplishment of such a measure," said Sybil, gently.

"Um—hum-m—ah, ha! I said so; I knew it; just like all other women—fools! stick to a bad man through thick and thin; and if he runs away, wear the willow fifty years for his sake. But look here, Sybil—my poor Sybil—don't weep; look at your child; look at him, and have a little mercy on his tender frame and his many wants," said the old man, pointing to little Hubert.

Sybil did look at her thinly-clad and shivering child,

and the appeal reached her heart; yet, mastering her rising emotion, she answered:

"I have! I have! I have thought of all that; and yet —and yet I cannot, indeed, I cannot, do as you recommend."

"Then God help you!" exclaimed the old man, rising in pique; "I have no more to say. Good-morning, my dear."

"Won't you sit longer, cousin?" asked Sybil, timidly.

"No! no, I thank you. I shall be very busy all day to-day. I shall leave to-morrow."

The fire was dying out, and the room was getting chilly, so that Sybil did not press her invitation. She extended her hand cordially to the old man, as she said:

"You will remember, dear general, to get those letters for me."

"Yes, yes; I'll do that," said he. "Good-by, cousin Sybil; farewell, little one," said he, shaking hands with Sybil, and caressing the child.

"Never mind," thought the old gentleman, as he entered his carriage, "I'll let her alone awhile, and I'll bet before the month is out she'll be writing to me, revoking her decision."

The old man was gone, the fire had burned out, and Sybil and her boy were left alone before the cold hearth.

Sybil caught up the boy to her bosom, and wept bitterly. Suddenly she thought of the preacher whom she had heard the preceding Sunday. The hopeful and comforting words of his discourse came back to her mind with a soothing influence. They did more; they inspired her with courage and energy.

"Yes," said she aloud, "that minister! why did I not think of him before? I know he is a good man, and he will advise me in what manner to set about procuring pupils. I will go to him at once."

THE PASTOR.

Mrs. Middleton arrived at the pastor's house, and was shown up into his study, and informed by the servant that Mr. Livingston would be with her in a few minutes. Sybil was changed very much since her first presentation to the reader. Though not yet twenty years old, the rose of youth had faded from her pale cheek; yet her fair complexion—large, clear, blue, serene eyes—her sweet, serious lips—her gentle manner—and low, sweet voice, and her mourning dress, rendered her far more interesting than in her days of health and happiness. Sybil wanted self-possession, and she trembled slightly as she entered the pastor's study. The ten minutes, however, that elapsed before his entrance, enabled he to regain composure.

Mr. Livingston, the pastor, now entered. He was a man of about forty years of age, tall, slender, with dark hair and eyes, and strikingly handsome, notwithstanding a pale complexion and hollow cheeks. Mrs. Middleton was reassured by the kindly manner and gentle tones with which this Christian pastor greeted her.

"I hope you will pardon the liberty I take in calling

upon you, Mr. Livingston. I am a stranger in this city, and I wish to open a small school, by which to support myself and child; and I have come to-day to solicit your assistance in my project, or at least your advice as to what steps it will be proper to take toward its accomplishment."

"You are a widow, I presume, madam?" said the pastor, glancing at Mrs. Middleton's mourning dress.

"No, sir," murmured Sybil, a burning blush mounting to her brow.

The pastor looked at her in doubt; then said:

"You are probably able to produce good references?"

"Sir?"

"You are provided with testimonials of moral and intellectual fitness for the profession you wish to enter upon?"

"I have no such testimonials, sir, just now; but I hope to receive some in a few days, from my native place."

"They are indispensable to your success, my dear madam, and I trust you will be able to procure them; if you do, I shall take pleasure in rendering all the assistance in my power toward the accomplishment of your object."

A quick flush passed over the pale cheek of Mrs. Middleton. She felt humiliated. She knew that she was suspected. She did not know that such was the case with

every poor, needy, and friendless woman, especially if she be young, pretty and a stranger. Sybil arose and took leave. Her parting look of suffering resignation smote upon the heart of the minister. He stepped after her, and said, gently:

"Give me your name and address, madam; I will call and see what can be done in your case to-morrow."

Sybil now recollected, with confusion, that she had not given her name. She did as he requested, and went her way home reassured, thinking:

"I was not mistaken, after all, in Mr. Livingston—such a calm and holy smile—such a sweet, soothing voice—and then his general manner, so gentle, though I saw he did not think justly of me; but my awkwardness and confusion impressed him unfavorably at first."

The next day the minister called. Sybil was in her chamber, putting her boy to sleep, so that the minister sat in her little parlor some ten minutes, before she made her appearance. Mr. Livingston had been favorably impressed with Sybil; he was now confirmed in his good opinion by the appearance of her home. There is something about a dwelling, or the furniture of a dwelling, that will impress one favorably, or otherwise, with its occupant. Sybil's little parlor told her story. The furniture was a portion of that brought from Brotherton Hall,

telling of decayed gentility. There was the rich old Turkey carpet, somewhat worn, that covered the floor; there were the crimson damask curtains, somewhat faded, that hung from the windows; there was the old-fashioned stuffed chairs—the large, unwieldy sofa—the heavy mahogany tables; and last, and most eloquent, were the fine old family portraits, all choice specimens of art, that hung upon the walls. There was a portrait of old Mrs. Brotherton, of Sybil's father and mother, and one of Sybil herself. One very characteristic thing I neglected to mention. It was three hanging shelves, containing Sybil's library of novels and romances. The observant eye of the pastor noted and drew conclusions from everything; but the portrait of Sybil in her blooming, happy girlhood, arrested and fixed his attention. He was gazing upon it, in deep thought, when Mrs. Middleton came in.

"My dear Mrs. Middleton," said he, turning to meet her, "I must beg your confidence; you have told me that you are distressed; I see that you are reduced. I wish to devote my poor energies to your service; but, in order to serve you effectually, I would know more of your circumstances and expectations."

Sybil looked in his face. The noble frankness of the expression inspired her with confidence. She thanked

him, and, with a flushed cheek and averted eye, she told her story. The minister listened with deep attention, and at the close of her narration he sought to direct her attention to the Great Source of strength and joy. Feeling her religious sympathies drawn out, Sybil related the emotion she had felt upon the receipt of her last letter, the whirlwind of anger that had shaken her soul, her subsequent alarm and repentance, and the peace and hope that had filled her bosom since. To this naive confession the pastor listened with deep interest; for by that glimpse into the soul of Sybil he recognized a nature capable of the highest religious and intellectual culture, and one therefore likely to be refined in the seven times heated furnace of affliction Moral philosophy was the pastor's favorite study; and men and women, with their trials and temptations, were the books he read upon the subject. The refined, the strong, the tempted and struggling soul of Sybil Middleton attracted him forcibly, and he resolved to watch, to shield, and strengthen it in its contest. But, of that, more by and by. He did not for a moment lose sight of the immediate object of his visit—the temporal welfare of his intended *protégée*. He discovered Sybil's musical proficiency, and advised her to commence by instructing a few young ladies in that accomplishment, and volunteered to go among his parishioners and seek

out pupils for her. Mrs. Middleton expressed her gratitude, and the pastor arose to take leave. His eye fell upon Sybil's bookshelves, filled with romances, and a slight smile curled his lip, as he asked:

"Is this your favorite reading, Mrs. Middleton?"

"In my days of ease and cheerfulness, I used to delight in these books," answered Sybil; "but now——"

"But now you require the most precious thoughts of the most holy writers to comfort and sustain you—books that you can feed upon. Shall I send you some such?"

"If you please, Mr. Livingston; I shall be very grateful. But, indeed, you are too kind to me—to me, who have no claim upon you, or any one else."

"Pardon me; you have a claim upon me, and a claim upon society; and the claim is mutual. Society demands of you that you cultivate all your natural gifts to the utmost, and use them for its benefit. You, then, have a right to demand of society, happiness."

The minister took leave, and the same day went about among the members of his congregation to solicit pupils for his new *protégée*. The Rev. Stephen Livingston was more than popular among his parishioners; he had a rising name, and they were proud of him. Any enterprise, therefore, favored by their pastor, was very likely to be highly successful. Mr. Livingston's *protégée* was en-

thusiastically taken up and excessively patronized by his congregation. A class of fifteen pupils was soon made up for Mrs. Middleton. Many of them, at Mr. Livingston's instance, paid in advance; and in that way Sybil's immediate wants were relieved. From this time, the light of hope sparkled again in the eyes of Sybil, the rose of health bloomed again on her cheeks. Her new profession introduced her among an intelligent and cultivated circle of acquaintances, some of whom, who were not too aristocratic to notice their children's teacher, eventually became warm friends. Mrs. Middleton became deeply, yet healthfully interested in the progress of her pupils; and when her list of fifteen increased to thirty, nearly all her time in the day was taken up in attending upon them. The day would thus pass quickly and pleasantly away; for my heroine, reader, was of a cheerful and grateful temper, and did not call her daily occupation toil, nor her interest in it anxiety. Then upon her return home in the evening, she would find a blazing fire, and tea prepared in her little parlor, and perhaps a new book left by the pastor, awaiting her. When the weather would permit, little Hubert would be at the gate waiting, and would totter forth to meet her. At such times, the mother's heart would bound to meet her boy, and, catching him up in her arms, she would hurry into the house, and, sitting down,

would strain him to her bosom, covering him with kisses the while. Katy, since she was no longer pinched with hunger or chilled with cold, was as blithe as a bird, and sung at her work all day long; while old Broom, who had run his visit into a permanent stay, employed himself in sawing and packing away wood for the winter's use; in clearing up the garden, which he meant to put under cultivation in the spring; and in attending to little Hubert.

THE PACKET.

One cold, damp evening, near the spring, Sybil returned home later than usual. It had been drizzling all day long, and toward evening the rain had fallen in torrents. Sybil had remained with the pupil whom she had last visited until near dark, hoping that the rain would cease. At last, borrowing an umbrella, she set out for home. How cheerful looked her little cottage, with the lights gleaming through its parlor windows! She entered the house, and, throwing aside her cloak and hood, looked around for little Hubert. Not seeing him, she passed into her chamber, where he lay asleep; kissing him softly, and murmuring a blessing, she returned to the little parlor. Everything was comfortable there; the wood fire was blazing cheerfully, the tea-table was set, and Sybil's workstand and basket placed in the corner, with her rocking-chair and footstool near it. Sybil sat down at her workstand, while Katy brought in tea.

"The parson been here, ma'am," said Katy; "waited for you a good while; just gone away; left this book for you in your workbasket."

Sybil took up the book, murmuring to herself:

"'Paley'; oh! Mr. Livingston is so kind! No one was ever so kind to me before, except my poor old grandmother. But what is this, Katy?" said she, about taking up a packet directed, in a strange hand, to herself, and bearing a ship stamp. "Who left this?"

"That! Yes, ma'am; he brought that, too, from the pos' office for you."

Sybil tore off the envelope. It was a London paper. She unfolded it and read with astonishment and grief the following notice, to which her attention was directed by a couple of pen strokes:

"DIED.—At his residence, in Portman Square, on the thirtieth of October, Harold Preble Middleton, son of the Hon. Fenton Preble Middleton, and grandson of the Right Hon. the Earl of Mainwaring."

The paper dropped from her hands, and Sybil fell into thought. She did not reflect upon the man who had oppressed, deserted, slandered her; she thought only of the lover of her youth, the father of her child, and her tears began to flow faster than she could wipe them away.

"Well, I declare, Mrs. Middleton," said Katy, coming in, "you have not touched a mouthful of supper. I took

such pains with them sponge-cakes, too; and the tea is best 'perial."

"You may take the table away, Katy," said Sybil, and, arising and passing into her chamber, she fell weeping upon the crib of her child.

GENERAL AND MRS. BROTHERTON.

To say that Sybil was the "inconsolable" widow of a man whom she had married upon a slight and insufficient acquaintance, who had remained with her comparatively but a short time, who had abused her even unto personal violence, who had forsaken her at her utmost need, aspersed her character, and disowned her child—to say this would be an incredible libel on her sanity. "Some natural tears she shed, but wiped them soon." She remained at home a fortnight, and occupied herself with making up her mourning, without thinking of the necessity of sending notes of explanation to her patrons, who were left by that omission to conjecture the cause of her protracted absence from her pupils. These conjectures at length reached the ears of the pastor, and he resolved to call and see Mrs. Middleton. He found Sybil calmly at work with her needle, while her little boy played upon the carpet. No change in Sybil's looks warned him of what had occurred, so he said to her playfully:

"My dear Mrs. Middleton, I have resolved myself into a committee of inquiry, to ascertain the cause or causes of your self-immersement."

In their lively moments, Sybil had always answered his smiles with smiling, and his quibs with quiddities, but now her grave countenance seemed to rebuke his jesting. Requesting him to be seated, she arose from her chair, and, taking from her writing-desk the London paper, put it into his hands, and, pointing to the obituary notice, said, while the tears arose to her eyes:

"The knowledge of that event has kept me at home for some time past. Will you please inform my patrons of it?"

Her large, tender eyes were raised to the pastor's face as she spoke, and she observed with surprise and displeasure the sudden, the involuntary flush of—something that lighted up the pastor's face as he read. Well! I own it; for my part, I do "expect perfection from human beings," at least, from some of us, and especially from Christian ministers; and I feel humiliated to be obliged to acknowledge the existence of a single human weakness in Mr. Livingston; but so it was, the Rev. Stephen Livingston, the fervent Christian, the beloved pastor, the rising divine, had not lately, with his whole soul, worshiped one God, but in the temple of his heart one niche was occupied by an idol. Little did he suspect this, however, until, in perusing the paragraph, he discovered the real nature of his regard for Sybil by the sudden recollection of the pos-

sibility of its gratification. Reproaching himself immediately and bitterly for this feeling, he returned the paper to Sybil, saying coldly, as he arose to take leave:

"Mrs. Middleton, you may, and I hope will, command my services in this distressing affair, whenever they may be required."

Sybil thanked him, and returned his cold "Good-evening, madam," with a distant "Good-night, sir."

"And now," thought the pastor, as he turned from the door, "I do not see that I have effaced one error of sinful exultation by another error of studied coldness. Poor child! at the very moment that she required consolation, advice and assistance, to leave her so abruptly, without offering a single word of comfort. I must certainly see her again soon, and make amends for this."

Mrs. Middleton also indulged in a soliloquy to this effect:

"I am afraid, after all, that I have a very bad, or at least a very conceited mind. To think that I should be so vain as to suppose that Mr. Livingston was—that he felt—that the pastor thought"—Sybil durst not finish the sentence, even mentally, but, with a feeling of self-abasement, endeavored to force her thoughts from the subject, after saying to herself:

"Yes, yes; I have done the good pastor foul wrong

by my vain suspicions. Well, well; I will be more reasonable when he comes again, if, indeed, he ever comes, after my cold ingratitude."

The next day the pastor called with more friendly offers of assistance, and his visit passed off in the easy manner of their first acquaintance. At his suggestion, Sybil resolved to do many things, very necessary to be done, but which, with her limited knowledge of life, she would not else have thought of doing. For instance, the obituary notice was sent to some of the Baltimore papers; a letter was written to General Brotherton, informing him of her widowhood; and another letter was written to the Earl of Mainwaring, inquiring the particulars of Mr. Middleton's decease. Having assisted Sybil in all these matters, Mr. Livingston refrained from visiting her again. It was now, by missing it, that Sybil began to estimate the society of the pastor at its full value; she also divined the cause of his absence, though no word or glance had hinted it—such is the mental freemasonry of affection.

A few weeks after this, when the spring had well opened, Sybil received a visit from General and Mrs. Brotherton. They had come to renew their generous proposal to Sybil, and, in the event of her rejecting it, to invite her to pass the first year of her widowhood at Brotherton Hall. In thinking of Mrs. General Brotherton, and

in hearing her called by the general "the old lady," and "the old wife," and "my old lady," Sybil had pictured to herself a venerable woman, not unlike her departed grandmother. What was her surprise, then, when the general introduced her to a handsome, fashionable-looking Frenchwoman, really forty-eight, but apparently about thirty-five years of age. Sybil had heard, it is true, that General Brotherton, during his service in the old French war, had been taken prisoner, and, during his captivity, had fallen in love with and married the daughter of a French officer, but she had lately forgotten it. General and Mrs. Brotherton remained in Baltimore a fortnight, and, during that time, the old proposition to Sybil was renewed. As there now existed no obstacle to its acceptance, Sybil gracefully acceded to it, and began making active preparations for a removal to Brotherton Hall, the general superintending the packing up and off of the furniture, while madam busied herself among milliners and mantua-makers, compelling Sybil to go with her on all her excursions. Though no two people could be more opposite in temper than the lively Frenchwoman and the thoughtful Sybil, yet (for this very reason, perhaps) they were strongly attached to each other. Sybil had parted with all her pupils, and taken leave of all her friends, and so she felt and looked very serious as she entered the car-

riage with General and Mrs. Brotherton, on the morning of her departure; so that madam said to her:

"Come! *ma belle*, you put on a look of fortitude quite gratuitous, under the circumstances; for, really, I cannot see that it requires so much moral courage to reconcile you to a black dress, when it becomes you so extremely well. If I, now, with my dark complexion, were compelled to make myself hideous in widow's weeds, it might be a matter of regret; but you—a fine girl like you—could not wear a more becoming color; therefore, leave that look of resignation, for I shall neither pity nor praise you on account of it."

Sybil raised her eyes to the face of Mrs. Brotherton in simple wonder.

"Ah! ah! *mignonne*," exclaimed madam. "Your eyes are quite large enough, and very beautiful, just as they are; do not try to stretch them any larger; for, *en verité*, I think your look of wonder even less attractive than your look of martyrdom."

"She's not mad, cousin Sybil; at least, not raving mad, although you may fear it. I assure you there is no danger. Madam is a harmless lunatic," said the general, seriously.

Sybil laughed, in spite of herself. The object of her

two relatives was effected; they had rallied her into cheerfulness. It was in May. It was late at night, and the full moon was shining brightly when they arrived at Brotherton Hall, and Sybil re-entered the home of her childhood.

SYBIL'S DREAM OF HAPPINESS.

A year had passed since the arrival of Mrs. Middleton and her child at Brotherton Hall—a year, during which she had won the affection of her relatives, who esteemed her as a daughter; a year dotted with a few bright days, the occasions upon which her sometime pastor had blessed Brotherton Hall with his visits.

Her letter to the Earl of Mainwaring had not been answered; but then, a voyage across the Atlantic, fifty years ago, was not the afternoon excursion that it is now; so that Sybil waited five or six months without anxiety. At the end of that time she had written again, and, to insure the safe delivery of her letter to its destination, she had inclosed it to the American Minister at the Court of St. James. She was now expecting an answer to this last letter. The spring of 1800 opened beautifully. The sunshine abroad was not more bright, warm and genial than the sunshine of the breast enjoyed by Sybil Middleton. At no period of her short life had Sybil been so happy. By a judicious attention to the laws of physiology, her early constitutional tendency to consumption had been conquered. By free exercise in the open air, and fre-

quent bathing, she had attained high health; and, during the course of her acquaintance with Mr. Livingston, her intellectual faculties had become greatly unfolded; and now Sybil Middleton, in the full development and high enjoyment of mental, moral and physical life, dreamed that she was about to attain the acme of human happiness; for, one who had assisted her in difficulty, advised her in prosperity, sympathized with her in sorrow—one who had developed and cultivated her intellect, enlarged and elevated her moral sense, enlightened and exalted her Christian faith—one whom she loved and worshiped next to God himself—had received her promise to become his wife. It was with the candor of pure affection that Sybil expressed the full joy she felt in giving him her hand. It is true that, for some months past Sybil had expected this proposal; yet, now that it had been made, she could scarcely believe in the reality of her happiness. That Livingston, upon whose words she had hung with such deep joy—that he from whose instructions she had derived such strength and comfort—he upon whom she constantly depended for guidance—he whom she revered and honored first upon earth, and whom she had lately grown to love with the whole strength of her earnest soul—that he should take her to his bosom, to pass her whole life with him, to bear his honored name, to share his

blessed labors—oh! this seemed a happiness too full for earth, and Sybil trembled amidst her joy, as the day of their marriage drew near.

"In one short week, my own dear Sybil!—in one short week we meet again, to part no more on earth. Oh! the joy, the joy to feel that this is our last brief separation! for I have grieved to leave you, even for a few days, my Sybil!" exclaimed Mr. Livingston, as he folded his betrothed bride to his bosom.

"Oh, yes! in one week more," murmured Sybil; "yet, ah! my own love, I grow superstitious, and tremble lest this joy be too full to last."

She raised her head from his bosom, and looked into his face; their eyes met in a long, full, earnest gaze; again he pressed her to his bosom in a silent embrace. Ah! if they could have died in that embrace! They parted.

THE AWAKENING.

Mr. Livingston, on his arrival at the parsonage late that night, found letters awaiting him. The first that arrested his attention bore a foreign mark; it was evidently from an acquaintance of his in London, and in answer to a letter of inquiry, written on the part of Mrs. Middleton. He took it up, opened the seal, and began to read. Did a basilisk blast his sight? Had he plucked up a mandrake to drive him mad? The paper fell from his cold hands. Dashing his clenched fists against his burning brow, he groaned out:

"My God! my God! This is too much for humanity to bear! Let me die now!"

He rushed out into the air, and up and down, through the cool streets he walked, without calming the fever of his blood, or cooling the fire in his brain—up and down through the silent streets, muttering half-smothered words of despair and grief—up and down through the dark streets, with a strange light gleaming in his eyes, until morning dawned; then, hurrying to his house, he shut himself up in his study, saying:

"No, no; I must not see her in this state of mind! I

must strive to conquer this. Good God! shall I, who pretend to strengthen and console others, go mad, or die myself?"

When the sun arose, and shone into the study of the pastor, its beams fell upon a face that seemed to have grown old in a night. He was sitting at a little table facing the window; his face was pale and haggard, his eyes hollow, his gaze strained upon a text in the open Bible before him, his thoughts concentrated upon a point —long he remained so. At length his head drooped upon the book—he prayed; it was the first time he had dared to pray since the opening of the fatal letter; he was strengthened; he became composed—though all day long he remained in his study without refreshment, reading, praying and meditating—though all night long he kept a vigil there; yet upon the following day, which was Sunday, he preached with his usual power and perspicuity. It is true that his congregation were shocked at his haggard countenance and shaking frame, and many of them made anxious inquiries concerning his health. Their pastor confessed that he was not well, and finally succeeded in escaping from his officious friends, and regaining the privacy of his home. Early on Monday morning the pastor arose, and, having saddled his horse himself, mounted, and took his way toward Brotherton Hall. He was again

changed. Not a vestige of emotion was visible in his face or manner. His countenance was sorrowful, but calm, resolute and still. His manner gentle and serious, yet determined.

That day Sybil was sitting alone, at work, singing in the overflowing joy of her heart. The little boy was trundling a hoop in the yard, and ever and anon, his merry laugh and shout came in at the open windows. General and Mrs. Brotherton were out taking a ride. Presently there was a sound of a horse's feet in the yard, a familiar footstep in the hall, a hand upon the lock, and Mr. Livingston stood before Sybil. His face was pale, and wore the impress of desperate sorrow, yet inflexible resolution.

Sybil had sprung to meet him, yet stood transfixed by his looks.

"Good Heavens, dearest! what is the matter? Has anything happened?" exclaimed she.

"Sit down, Sybil," said he, gravely; at the same time taking a seat himself.

"Yes—I will—but, oh! indeed, something has happened —I see it by your looks. Dear love, what can it be?" exclaimed Sybil, anxiously.

"Yes, Sybil, something has happened—something to change the whole current of our future lives. You are

growing pale, Sybil; summon all your Christian fortitude, or, if your strength fail, call on Him who giveth freely. I have received a letter from my London correspondent on the subject upon which I wrote to him six months ago —you remember——"

"Yes! yes!—well? well?"

"Well, Sybil!—my poor Sybil, we have been laboring under a fatal mistake—your husband is living!" Sybil fell back in her chair, deadly pale and faint. Mr. Livingston poured out and handed her a glass of water, which, when she had drunk, she murmured:

"It is over—it is over—that happy dream."

Deceived by her quietness, the pastor went on to say:

"This was the way in which the mistake originated, Mrs. Middleton——"

"You need not tell me! It is of no use! We do not care to know how the poison was distilled that has sapped our lives! We do not inquire where the dagger was wrought that is sheathed in our hearts!"

"Sybil! Sybil!—oh, Heaven support her! Her hands are icy cold—her breath comes thick and short. Sybil! oh! my poor Sybil—bear up under this; be resigned to the will of Heaven."

"Commonplace! commonplace! You'd say the same to a mother whose only child was about to be hung! 'Be

resigned!' 'Bear up!' And have I not borne up? Have I not been resigned? I, that have suffered as no one ever suffered before me! I, that have been tried as no one ever was tried before me! Resignation! fortitude! What have they done for me, but to provoke upon my head a reiteration of trial, as if Heaven were making the experiment of how much sorrow a human being could bear, without going mad!"

"Now, may Heaven forgive your wild words, Sybil! Oh! Sybil! suffer me to pray with you, as in days past!"

"Pray!" exclaimed she, bitterly; "to whom, and for what? Pray! I've prayed all my life; and here I sit, a tortured, a blighted, a miserable woman! I would I were annihilated!"

"Oh, Sybil! if this were the only life, still you would have no excuse for such a frantic arraignment of Providence. But, oh! bethink you, this dark, this thorny, this sorrowful road, if we tread it firmly and patiently, will lead us to——"

"'Another and a happier world,' perhaps. I know nothing of it! I do not see it! I do not hear it! Away with it! I will none of it! Give me—oh! give me happiness in this world, that I know." And Sybil, extending her arms pleadingly toward her lover, burst into tears. Struggling with a powerful emotion, the pastor turned

abruptly and walked to a window, at the opposite end of the room, where he remained a long time, apparently gazing out upon the landscape.

Laughing, jesting and joyous, General Brotherton and his wife now entered the room from their drive. Sybil slipped out and fled to her chamber to conceal her emotion, while the pastor turned tranquilly to meet them.

Very early on the next morning Mr. Livingston descended to the parlor. He was to leave Brotherton Hall after the family breakfast—to leave it with the probability of never returning; yet he resolved, before going, to put in execution a plan which he had matured during the night. He had been very much shaken by the despair of Sybil. He knew her disposition better than she knew herself. He knew that there could be no risk in the plan he resolved to propose in order to rouse all the energy of her soul, to throw off the weight of her sorrow. Through all this seeming stoicism, the pastor ever felt the wound that was festering in his own heart. The pastor had not been down many minutes before Sybil entered. She was very, very pale, gentle and subdued. Sinking, trembling, in a chair, she said, in a low, sad voice:

"Give me the letter now, my friend; I can read it now."

The pastor placed it in her hands. She read as follows:

MY DEAR FRIEND: I have made inquiries concerning the person of whom you wrote me. The obituary notice in the London paper referred to the Honorable Harold Preble Middleton, the grandson of the Earl of Mainwaring, a gentleman who has never left England, and who, besides, has left a widow and children in Portman Square. I have since learned that there is a relative of the family, bearing the same name, who spent three years in America. This person is represented to be a sort of genteel loafer, or aristocratic vagabond, who spends his time in going to and fro on the earth, and passing up and down in it; a sort of amateur artist, and is now at Rome, studying the old masterpieces of painting. With him is an Italian woman, who passes for his wife—one Inez or Inice di Silva.

The letter was long, but it here left the subject of so much interest to Sybil; so, folding it up slowly and calmly, she returned it to Livingston. Sybil was composed, but it was the composure of despair, the quiet of weakness—the feebleness of nature was upon her. Her heart seemed melting, dying in her bosom; and, indeed, she thought, and welcomed the thought, that this weakness was unto death. The pastor saw this, and felt the urgent necessity of rousing her.

"I am much relieved to see you have regained composure, dear Sybil."

"Yes—I have regained composure," said she, sighing. "But, oh! my dear friend, I have lost your good opinion—

I know it—I feel it; through the ravings of my despair, I have lost your esteem forever."

"No, dear Sybil, my esteem for you remains undiminished; I never supposed you to be an angel, and I am not surprised to find you a woman."

"But you were so firm, so self-possessed, so calm."

"Yes, Sybil, after two nights of moral tempest; and my calmness was perhaps as much the effect of exhausted nature, as of reason or religion. We have both sinned, Sybil, not hitherto in our attachment—for that was involuntary, inevitable—but in the terrible arraignment of Providence of which we have both been guilty."

"Yes, yes! Oh! I feel that," said Sybil. "It is well for us, indeed, that our Father in Heaven is so long-suffering and patient with us. Listen, my friend. When I fled to my chamber last evening I was mad! The very elements of my being were broken up—all was storm, confusion, chaos! And this storm raged through my soul until it exhausted my strength. I felt as though the very earth had rolled from beneath my feet, and I had forfeited my claim upon heaven. Eternal night seemed to have fallen upon my soul; I was desolate, forsaken, cursed. I was mad! I was tempted! The thought of self-destruction flashed into my mind, and I said, I will leave life, I will fly to death; and with the sophistry of

passion I added, I shall not be as a rebellious subject, rushing unbidden into the presence of his king—no, no, but as a tempest-driven child, flying for refuge to the bosom of her Father. I started up, my grasp was upon the lock of the door, when a gentle hand, a weak infant's hand, held me back. I turned, and little Hubert was standing by me, looking with wonder and grief upon me, while he murmured: 'I love you, mamma.' Oh! my friend, can you understand the revulsion of feeling that overpowered me? I sank down where I was, and, folding the babe to my bosom, I wept; and as my emotion subsided, I became penetrated with a sense of my ingratitude and sin, and I prayed. But, oh! my friend, before I prayed, simultaneously with the first dawning of penitence came a sense of forgiveness. God meets us more than half way with pardon; He does not wait for the bended knee; He does not stay for the forming prayer; He meets the first impulse of penitence with forgiveness. I do not pretend to account for the existence of suffering; I do not clearly comprehend the use of trial; but I know that God is good; I feel that God is love; I believe that we are not tortured in vain. But I am an egotist—I have talked too long; yet you have been in some sort my father confessor, Livingston," added she, with a sorrowful at-

tempted to smile. The short-lived animation that had borne her through this speech was fast dying away.

"No, dear Sybil; you have given me comfort," replied the pastor.

He still called her "dear Sybil," for he could not bring himself to address the failing, fainting woman before him in any but the language of tenderness. She had relapsed into a fearful apathy—her form was still as death—her face was ashy pale, even to her lips—the very torpor of despair seemed to have stupefied her—the very elements of existence seemed resolving into dissolution. The pastor saw this with alarm, and hastened to rouse her attention by the proposal of his plan.

"Listen to me, dear Sybil; there is hope for us yet."

"Hope!" echoed Sybil, unconsciously.

"Yes, hope. Attend to me, dear Sybil, if you please. You remember the proposition made to you by General Brotherton about two years ago—you remember, Sybil?"

"Yes," said Sybil, absently.

"When General Botherton is informed of the contents of this letter, that proposition will be renewed. Do you not think so?"

"Possibly," replied Sybil, indifferently.

"Probably; nay, certainly. What if you were to accept the conditions, and free yourself?"

Starting, half-raising herself, bending forward, while the light brightened in her eyes and the color warmed in her cheek, she exclaimed:

"Mr. Livingston, my friend, do you advise me to this?"

"Nay, Sybil—I advise you to nothing. This is a matter, above all others, upon which you must not take advice; but I do say to you, that it is worth investigation; and I promise, that if, after you shall have examined the subject by the light of the Holy Scriptures, with the aid of sincere prayer, you may religiously as well as legally free yourself, and enter a second engagement, I will then entreat you to bless me with your hand."

"But," said Sybil, reviving, "even if our own consciences were satisfied, such a marriage might impair your usefulness——"

"It might secure our happiness."

"No! as Heaven hears me," exclaimed Sybil, warmly, "I would not purchase happiness, even for you, at the price of the faintest shadow upon your Christian character."

"Dismiss that from your mind, Sybil. Let us strive to understand the will of God. Let us strive to do that which is right in the sight of God, and leave the consequences with Him."

"Then tell me what is right, my own dear guide and

mentor. I do not wish to go beyond you for direction in this difficulty. I am sure you know what is right, for you have seemed to stand between my God and myself, interpreting His will to me."

"No, Sybil! my gentle one, this is between God and your own conscience; it would be sacrilege to interfere. You must 'tread the wine-press alone,' looking to Him for fortitude who entered it alone before you."

"Alas! alas! and I have no father or mother to advise with me, no brother or sister to comfort me, no friend when you are gone to sympathize with me."

"Dear Sybil, you are of all persons the best fitted to judge of your own case, by the light of religion; no one knows the circumstances as you know them."

"I am very well aware that it is considered extremely ill-natured to intrude upon lovers; but when they choose the family breakfast-room, early in the morning, for their *tête-à-tête*, and less happy folks are hungry, how can it be avoided?" exclaimed the jovial old general, as he bustled into the room.

How his merriment jarred upon the excited nerves of Sybil!

"When I was wooing, we used to take woodland walks on such fine spring mornings as this. Ask madam—here she comes. I'm telling these transported people, Gabri-

elle, when you and I were transcendentalated, we did not stay about the house putting sensible people to inconvenience by taking possession of their breakfast-room, keeping them from their chocolate. No; when we were etherealized, and left eating and drinking to people that were 'of the earth earthy,' we rehearsed our dreams and visions 'amid the vasty solitudes of nature,' as cousin Sybil's books call mountains and forests. Come! old lady," added he, patting his wife affectionately on the shoulder, "make them stir about—stir about. As I have been shooting at water fowl and not at hearts, this morning, I am smitten with a rather exacting affection for coffee and toast."

The general had lately affected to call his wife "old lady," a sobriquet which the pretty Frenchwoman never failed to receive with a toss of the head, at once haughty, petulant and graceful, which shook down her ringlets in a most becoming fall.

Breakfast was served, and immediately after it was removed the pastor arose to take leave. He shook hands with Mrs. Brotherton, with the general, and approached Sybil with a sinking, dying heart—with a reeling brain. Well he knew that this was the last, last time he should ever behold her. Truly he felt that he should never, never again see her face, hear her voice, touch her hand—

the woman toward whom his whole being tended with a force, by an attraction, almost impossible to be checked. His heart sank, his brain reeled, his voice quivered, yet his words were cold.

"Mrs. Middleton, farewell."

"Good-by," said Sybil, as her cold hand fell heavily from his grasp.

That cold, conventional leave-taking amid the merry group! and with their bursting hearts! Well, perhaps it was better.

"'Mrs. Middleton!' Well, I call Venus, Cupid and Psyche, and all the Muses and Graces, to witness that I never called the old lady by any name than 'Flower,' 'Star,' 'Pearl,' 'Angel,' 'Seraph,' or 'Gabrielle,' that meant each and all, from the moment of our engagement until some three or four weeks after marriage!"

Livingston was gone.

"Why, cousin Sybil, what do you intend to do with such an icicle as that? Decidedly, that man has mistaken his vocation. He was intended for a monk. Sybil! Heavens! What is the matter? Wife! come here; she's ill—she's got an inflammation on the brain—her hands are cold as ice, her head as hot as fire—her eyes are wild. Sybil! speak to your old cousin; how do you feel?"

"What is good? What is evil? Where is God?" asked Sybil, wildly.

"Oh; my good gracious; she's mad, raving mad! Old lady, I say! All owing to that strong coffee—destroyed her nervous system. All owing to coffee and novels—drinking strong coffee and eating—I mean reading—novels, I know."

"You know nothing about it. Leave the room, general—you're like a bear nursing a baby," said Mrs. Brotherton, coming in.

"Yes; but Gabe—I mean old lady," amended the general, spitefully—"she's very ill, I tell you."

"She is not. It is a rush of blood to the brain—nothing more. Leave her to me."

The general left the room, grumbling: "She's my cousin, Gabrielle—not yours."

Madam looked after him with a fond, quizzing smile. She understood the pathology and treatment of overwrought passion as well as a Parisian doctor. Delicately refraining from expressing any surprise, or asking any questions, she applied the necessary remedies and soon restored her patient to composure.

Livingston had succeeded, by an almost superhuman exertion of will, in subduing all outward demonstrations of emotion while in the presence of Sybil. Leaving

Brotherton Hall, he spurred his horse into a furious gallop, as though he would ride away from himself, or win the race of sorrow; and rustics, who saw him shoot past like an arrow, surmised that he carried an express. Then, again, he would permit his horse to fall into a slow walk, as though he were pursuing a journey without object or aim; and those who knew his person might have conjectured that he was meditating his next Sabbath's discourse. He was tempted—for he knew that it was with himself—himself—that this question rested at last. He knew that the woman whose mind he had developed, whose heart was all his own, over whom he possessed unbounded influence, who never questioned his rectitude of principle, who seldom exerted her own moral agency, if he were at hand to decide for her—he felt that this woman could not fail to be won by his arguments to any course he should point out to her; and he felt that he was responsible not only for his own moral welfare, but for hers also—and he loved her moral welfare, above all things he loved that, and he regretted the feminine softness of character, that, while it made her so sweetly attractive, left her so much at his disposal; and he wished that corrected, and he knew that this trial would effect its cure, by calling out all the latent energies of her really strong soul, by arousing the sleeping strength of her

pure moral sense; and he had no fears for the result; he knew the features of her mind, as a mother knows the face of her child; he knew that she would suffer, struggle, but overcome. And he knew that her soul would come out from this struggle, pure as gold from the furnace, strong as steel from the tempering, healthful as a young giant from the wrestle. But, then, to lose her—to lose her! Oh! those three words expressed for him the very alpha and omega, the all of mortal agony—and, at the thought, he would feel exasperated to spurn away all his earthly usefulness and interests, to forego all his heavenly hopes and aspirations, to possess her—and would have done so, but for the right-directed will, the calm, the inflexible, the unchanged, the immutable will—the regal will—that sat restraining, directing, governing, subduing, this revolt of the passions, like an upright judge amid an excited populace.

The pastor reached home and commenced preparations to remove to the South. And thus it is—whenever two people are disappointed in love, the man goes away somewhere, flies to the North or the South Pole, or makes a balloon voyage to spend a winter in the moon, and speedily effaces old impressions by new ones; while the woman, poor thing! is left to brood over her disappointment, amid the very ruins of her tumbled-down castle

from the air, surrounded by all the associations of her past joy—taking the same walks, and missing one from her side—sitting in the same parlor, at the same hour, logically looking for the same form, listening for the same voice, "waiting for the steps that come not back." Decidedly, she would break her heart, but that some old aunty reminds her that men are not worth breaking hearts for; and, besides, broken hearts have gone out of fashion, and women don't like to be unfashionable.

THE STRUGGLE.

But Sybil, poor Sybil, with her strong affections, her fervent aspirations after right, her feebleness of will, her nervous temperament, and her terrible trial!

When General Brotherton had read the letter that had been silently placed in his hands by Livingston at leaving, the old gentleman's rage exploded and scattered consternation throughout his household. You would have supposed, to have heard him, that he considered the continued existence of Middleton as the very climax of his crimes. If he ever dared to set foot in America he would hang him up with his own hands, as he would a thieving cur. He wouldn't wait for that—he'd go to Rome, old as he was, that he would, and shoot the fellow like a mad dog. And the old gentleman drove the dogs from the room, kicked the cat, scolded the servants, and frightened the child, by way of convincing people that he meant what he said.

After a few days, having reconsidered the subject of setting Providence right in this matter of life and death, General Brotherton renewed his former proposition, and pressed Sybil to its adoption—using all the arguments

that his clear, logical, worldly view of the affair could suggest. Sybil, whom the surges of emotion that had swept over her had left quiet and weak, replied that she would think of it.

"She will 'think of it.' Gabrielle! do you hear? She 'will think of it;' that's a great point gained. It's easy to perceive that her desire for the crown of martyrdom is considerably diminished. I should judge the parson had set her right upon some points of Christian doctrine."

And Sybil did think of it—until her brain reeled and her reason tottered. She did not examine the moral and legal authorities upon the subject, for she did not possess a logical mind, and she said, properly enough: "They will only confuse my mind with their arguments and counter-arguments, for half the time they are more desirous to conquer in controversy than to find truth; but I will go to the fount of light and truth—I will go to the Bible;" and she went to the Bible, and she searched with care, with eagerness, with breathless avidity, with an earnest desire to find that which she sought—Christian permission to free herself; and she found that there is but one cause for which a man may divorce his wife, and no cause, none, for which a woman may divorce her husband and marry again. There is something in Bible truth that heals while it probes, that strengthens while it chastises.

He who laid down this seemingly partial law understood the hearts of women, and knew the comparatively spiritual nature of their affections. He who delivered this stringent command was himself steeped to the lips in suffering, was himself "tempted in all things as we are." Never before had Sybil so sympathized (thus to speak) with the Saviour's sufferings, never had she so realized the Saviour's temptations, never had she so received the great lesson of the Saviour's life and death, as now, when, "searching the Scriptures" in sorrow and temptation, and in the tenderness of her melted heart, she breathed forth:

"Not all thy promises, oh! Saviour, affect me so much as thy example and thy sufferings. I will bear my cross, even so, Sufferer and Saviour, for it was Thy way."

All emotion, even religious emotion, is short-lived, and not to be trusted. The only permanent safety is in a clear conception of duty, and a resolute determination to act up to it, looking to God for strengh. So true is this that, through all their teaching, the Saviour and his Apostles seldom or never appeal to passion or imagination—generally to reason.

Sybil's religious enthusiasm subsided, and then came the temptation in its might—the temptation of a lifetime, the trial of principle, the test of faith, the crisis of character—the point upon which all that could blind to right, all

that could tempt to evil, were brought to a focus. To every one who has passed unsullied through the lesser temptations of this world, to every one upon whom the common trials of life have had little influence, to every one who has attained a certain moral point of elevation, there comes once in life one trial of pre-eminent strength, one temptation of almost irresistible might, one test of infallible truth—a temptation, through the most powerful passion of the soul, of the weakest point in the character, This touchstone may be applied in youth, in mid-life, or in age; and the result is almost invariably final, giving the bent to character for time and for eternity. To one whose besetting sin is avarice, this test may come in the shape of some rare chance to secure a great pecuniary profit, at the cost of a slight departure from rectitude; and it may come in a time of great penury and severe privation, and it may offer affluence at the price of integrity. How severe his struggle then! Will he stop to inquire: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" To one of a higher grade, for whom wealth has but little attraction, but to whom the applause of men is as the breath of life, it may come, this touchstone, in the form of some golden opportunity of securing popular favor by a slight deviation from the straight line of duty—as when some great statesman, whose pop-

ularity is fluctuating, is tempted of his ambition to engage in some popular but unholy cause; it may come when his favor with men is at the lowest ebb, and it may place within his reach the very prize of his life-long hopes, the very god of his life-long aspirations—requiring of him only to overleap some obstacle of duty to reach it, to let fall some principle of justice to grasp it. Will he, the tempted, then feel that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God"? and will he remember that the most unpopular man on earth, during his life, was "Jesus of Nazareth, whom they crucified"?

And to those to whom neither the applause of nations nor the wealth of the Indies have attractions sufficient to draw from duty, but who are gifted with ardent affections, and whose dearest and most importunate sin is to bestow love and worship, due only to the Creator, upon the creature—to them comes an opportunity of satisfying to the full the strong and craving affections, at a sacrifice of principle seemingly so trifling as not to subject them to the strictures of the most moral community, or exclude them from the communion of the most puritanical Christian church, but which the microscopic eye of a faithful conscience will detect and expose. Will the tempted then remember that, if duty demanded it, the right hand must be cut off, the right eye plucked out, Isaac offered up?

In all her former sorrows, Sybil Middleton had been simply a passive sufferer, bearing meekly the troubles which she could not avert, but exercising no moral agency, practicing no self-denial, achieving no victory. True, the mild virtues of patience and resignation had been brought out, but these were natural to Sybil hitherto; she could not have been otherwise than resigned and patient under suffering. But now there came a far greater trial—a duty demanding not self-immolation only—oh, no! that would have been comparatively a light grief, a slight test—but the sacrifice of one dearer than self, the casting out of the object of the heart's fondest affections, the hurling down of the idol of the soul's highest worship. The struggle was long and fierce; nights of watching, days of tears, weeks of sorrow, passed before Sybil could turn a deaf ear to the solicitations of affection and of interest, and resolve to be true to her present conceptions of duty. At last she took a pen and wrote to Mr. Livingston as follows:

MR. LIVINGSTON—I have decided. We must meet no more. We must write no more. Let an ocean of silence and distance freeze up between us. Let us die to each other. SYBIL.

Not until this letter was sealed and sent did Sybil realize that all indeed was over. She threw herself upon the

lounge—she buried her head in the pillows, as if to shut out all sight and sound, writhing and quivering as though in the extremity of mortal anguish; then, starting from her couch, and tossing her wild hair from her face, she walked the floor with nervous and irregular steps, wringing and twisting her pale fingers together; and when this passion had exhausted its victim, she lay in the apathy of despair, content with the silence, darkness and repose of her chamber—dreading light, sound, or disturbance—scarcely wishing for a change, though that change might bring happiness. Alas! for the reward of an approving conscience; alas! for the triumph of a victory over temptation; alas! for the support of conscious rectitude. She felt none of these consolations now—none. It is not in the first moments of such a victory, the soul, exhausted with its struggles and prostrate with its sufferings, that such comfort can be received. It is not at the instant that the right hand is cut off, that the right eye is plucked out, and the wounds are still smarting and bleeding, that one feels it to be "better" so. It is not at the moment in which the most cherished object of the affections, which has become entwined with every fibre of the heart, is first torn away, and the severed tendons are lacerated and bleeding, that they can clasp any support, or repose on any pillow. The time of strength and joy does come—

and it comes in beauty, in glory, and in permanency; but it dawns gradually as the morning after a night of storms and darkness. Sybil gradually obtained composure, by degrees became interested in her daily avocations, and eventually grew happy, realizing that happiness does not consist in the accomplishment of our dearest wishes, but in the cultivation and exercise of our virtues.

I have dwelt too long upon the trials of Sybil, trials which were all comprised in the passage of a few years, which were actually felt only for a few weeks. She had received the attacks of some severe troubles, and sustained the shock of one terrible disappointment; yet, now that she has survived the snows of seventy winters, now that her form is bowed, and her hair is white with age and not with grief, you might look upon that calm face and believe that grief had never convulsed it; upon that clear brow, and believe that care had never clouded it; into that serene eye, and think that tears had never dimmed it. And more—you may hear it often observed, that "Mrs. Middleton has a very young-looking face for her age;" and the reply, "Yes, very; but, then, she has never had any trouble to make her look old!" And that is all they know about it, reader!

And the pastor! Livingston obtained a pastoral charge in the South. He became eminent as a theologian, a phil-

anthropist, and a moral philosopher; yet people said that in his private life he was a cold, severe ascetic, proof against all tender impressions—a very woman-hater; and that was all they knew about it, reader!

Verily, "The true greatness of human life is almost altogether out of sight."

THE END.

THE IRISH REFUGEE.

The only son of his mother, and she was a widow.—LUKE vii. 12.

Long years shall see thee roaming
A sad and weary way,
Like traveler tired at gloaming
Of a sultry summer day.
But soon a home will greet thee,
Though low its portals be,
And ready kinsmen meet thee,
And peace that will not flee.—PERCIVAL.

It was a lovely morning, that last Saturday in July, 1849. The sun had not yet risen when our family party, consisting of Aunt and Uncle Clive, Cousin Christine and myself, took seats at an early breakfast-table. A capacious carriage, well packed with presents for country cousins, stood at the door, ready to convey us to Virginia, to spend the month of August. We, a merry set of grown-up children, were too delighted with our prospective pleasure to eat anything, and so we soon left the table and put on our bonnets and hats, preparatory to a start. We entered the carriage.

"Now, then, are we all ready?" asked Uncle Clive.

"Yes," replied aunt.

"Has nothing been forgotten?"

"No—but stay! Where is Cousin Peggy's cap, Chrissy?"

"There—pinned up in that paper to the roof of the carriage. Don't hit your head against it, uncle."

"Clive, where did you put the basket of bread and butter and cold chicken?"

"There—in the bottom of the carriage. Be careful, now, my dear, or you will get your feet into it."

"No, I shan't. But hadn't you better put the bandbox with Martha's bonnet inside here?"

"Indeed, mother," interposed Miss Chrissy, "there is no room for it; for Cousin Peggy's bundle is on one side and the keg of crackers on the other; my feet are resting on the caddy of tea, and the loaf of sugar and paper of coffee are in my lap!"

"There! let's get along," said Uncle Clive, impatiently. "I declare, the sun is already half an hour high, and a ride of forty-five or fifty miles before us. We shall not reach Willow Glade before ten o'clock to-night."

"Yes, and about nine o'clock we shall be going down Bloody Run Hill, and I never can go through the piece of woods between that and Gibbet Hill after dark without horror."

"Ever since the peddler was murdered."

"Yes, ever since the peddler was murdered, and before, too."

Uncle Clive now jumped into his seat, and, taking the reins, we set off at a pretty brisk rate.

"Clive, don't that horse look a little vicious? See how he pricks up his ears!"

"Pooh! Nonsense! He's as safe a horse as ever drew."

"What o'clock is it, now?"

"Humph! half-past five. I think the next time we wish to get off at sunrise, we had better arrange to start at midnight; then, perhaps, we may succeed."

Turning the corner of the street at this moment the sudden sight of the river, and the wood on the opposite bank, glimmering and glistening in the light of the morning sun, elicited a simultaneous burst of admiration from our travelers. Then the prospective pleasures of the rural visit were discussed, the family and friendly reunions, the dinner parties, the fish feasts upon the river's banks, the oyster excursions and crab expeditions; and in such pleasant anticipations the cheerful hours of that delightful forenoon slipped away; and when, at last, the heat of the sun grew oppressive, and our sharpened appetites reminded us of the dinner-basket, we began to cast around for a cool, dry and shady spot on which to rest and refresh ourselves. The road here was wide and passed through a thick forest. A few more turns of the wheels brought us to a narrow footpath, diverging from the main road into the forest on the left-hand side.

"Let's get out here, Clive, and follow this path; I know it. It leads to a fine spring, with an acre or two of cleared land about it, on which there was once a dwelling."

This was agreed upon, and we all alighted and took the path through the wood. We had not gone many yards ere a scene of woodland beauty opened to our view. It presented an area of about four acres of open land in the midst of the forest. From the opposite side a little rivulet took its rise, and ran tinkling and splashing, in its pebbly bed, through the centre of this open glade, until its music was lost in the distance in the forest. But the most interesting object in sight was a ruined cottage. It was very small. It could not have contained more than two rooms. In front there had once been a door, with a window on each side; but now both door and windows were gone.

The solitary chimney had fallen down, and the stones of which it had been built lay scattered around. A peach tree grew at the side of the cottage, and its branches, heavy with the luscious fruit, drooped upon the low roof. A grapevine grew in front, and its graceful tendrils twined in and out through the sashless windows and the broken door. A bird of prey was perched upon the house, and, as we approached, with a fearful scream it took its flight.

"Be careful, Christine, where you step; your foot is on a grave!"

With a start and a sudden pallor, Christine looked down upon the fragment of a gravestone. Stooping and putting aside the long grass and weeds, she read: "The only child of his mother, and she a widow."

"Whose grave could this have been, mother? The

upper part of the stone, which should bear the name, is gone. Oh, how sad this ruined cot, and this lonely grave! I suppose, mother, here, in the heart of the forest, in this small cottage, lived the widow and her only child. The child died, as we may see, and she—oh! was the boon of death granted to her at the same moment? But, who were they, mother? As your early life was passed in this part of the country, you surely can tell us."

Aunt Clive, who had been gazing sadly and silently on the scene since giving the warning to Christine, said:

"Yes, I can tell you the story. But here comes your father, looking very tired and hungry; and, as it is a very sad tale, we will defer it until we have dined."

We spread our repast upon the grass, and, seating ourselves upon the fragments of the broken chimney, soon became engrossed in the discussion of cold chicken, ham and bread. As soon as we had dispatched them and repacked our basket, and while we were waiting for the horses to feed and rest, Aunt Clive told us the following tale of real life:

THE IRISH EMIGRANTS.

A short time previous to the breaking out of the Rebellion in Ireland a family of distinction came from that country to America and purchased and settled upon a handsome estate near the then flourishing village of Richmond. Their family name was Delany. With them came a Dr. Dulan, a clergyman of the established church. Through the influence of the Delanys, Dr. Dulan was

preferred to the rectorship of the newly established parish of All Saints, and subsequently to the president's chair of the new collegiate school of Newton Hall. This prosperity enabled him to send for his son and daughter, and settle with them in a comfortable home near the scene of his labors.

It was about the fifth year of his residence in Virginia that the rebellion in Ireland broke out, and foremost among the patriots was young Robert Dulan, a brother of the doctor. All know how that desperate and fatal effort terminated. Soon after the martyrdom of the noble Emmet, young Dulan was arrested, tried, condemned, and followed his admired leader to the scaffold, leaving his heart-broken young wife and infant boy in extreme penury and destitution. As soon as she recovered from the first stunning shock of her bereavement, she wrote to her brother-in-law, soliciting protection for herself and child. To this the doctor, who, to great austerity of manners, united an excellent heart, replied by inviting his brother's widow to come to Virginia, and inclosing the amount of money required to supply the means. As soon as the old gentleman had done that he began to prepare for her reception. Knowing that two families seldom get on well beneath the same roof, and with a delicate consideration for the peculiar nature of her trials, he wished to give her a home of her own. Selecting this spot for the beauty and seclusion of its position, as well as for its proximity to his own residence, he built this cottage, inclosed it by a neat paling, and planted fruit

trees. It was a very cheerful, pretty place, this neat, new cottage, painted white, with green window shutters; the white curtains; the honeysuckle and white jessamine, trained to grow over and shade the windows; the white paling, tipped with green; the clean gravel walk that led up to the door, the borders of which were skirted with white and with red roses; the clusters of tulips, lilies and hyacinths—all contributed to make the wilderness "blossom as the rose;" and every day the kind-hearted man sought to add some new attraction to the scene.

One evening the doctor had been over to the cottage, superintending the arrangement of some furniture. On his return home, a servant brought a packet of letters and papers. Glancing over one of them, he said:

"Elizabeth, my daughter."

A prim young lady, in a high-necked dress, and a close-fitting black net cap, looked up from her work and answered in a low, formal voice:

"My father."

"Your aunt and cousin have at length arrived at the port of Baltimore. They came over in the *Walter Raleigh*. I wish you to be in readiness to accompany me to-morrow when I go to bring them down."

"My father, yes," were the only words that escaped the formal and frozen girl.

A week after this conversation the still life of the beautiful cottage was enlivened. A lovely boy played before the door, while a pale mother watched him from within. That pale mother was not yet thirty years of

age, yet her cheeks were sunken, her eyes dim, and her hair streaked with silver. Truly, the face was breaking fast, but the heart was breaking faster. But the boy! Oh, he was a noble child! Tall for his age (he was but five years old), his dark hair, parted over a high, broad forehead, fell in sable curls upon his shoulders; his large black eyes, now keen and piercing as the young eagle's, now soft and melting as the dove's. His dark eyes wore their softest shade as he stole to his mother's side, and, twining his little arms around her neck, drew her face down to his, saying, with a kiss: "Willie is so sorry?"

"For what should Willie be sorry?" said the mother, tenderly caressing him.

"Because mamma is sad. Does she want Willie to do anything?"

"No, sweet boy, she wants nothing done that Willie can do."

"If mamma's head aches, Willie will hold it."

"Her head does not ache."

"If mamma wants Willie to stop teasing her and go to bed, he will go."

"You are not teasing me, dear Willie, and it is rather too early for you to go to bed."

The widow strove to chase the gloom from her brow, that she might not darken by its shadow the bright sunshine of her child's early life, and with an effort at cheerfulness she exclaimed: "Now go, Willie, and get the pretty book Cousin Elizabeth gave you, and see if you can read the stories in it."

Willie ran off to obey with cheerful alacrity.

The doctor was not able to do more for his sister-in-law than to give her the cottage and supply her with the necessaries of life; and to do this, he cheerfully curtailed the expenses of his own household. It was delightful to see the affectionate gratitude of the widow and child toward their benefactor. And that angel child, I wish I could do justice to his filial devotion. He seemed, at that early age, to feel as though he only lived to love and bless his mother. To be constantly at her side, to wait upon her, even to study her wants and anticipate her wishes, seemed to be the greatest joy of the little creature.

"Willie, why don't you eat your cake?" asked his uncle one day, when Willie had been sent over to the doctor's on an errand, and had been treated to a large slice of plumcake by his Cousin Elizabeth.

Willie silently began to nibble his cake, but with evident reluctance.

"Why, you do not seem to like it! Is it not good?"

"Yes, sir, thank you."

"Why don't you eat it, then?"

"My father," said Elizabeth.

"Well, Miss Dulan?"

"I think that Willie always carries every piece of cake he gets to his mother."

"But why not always prevent that by sending her a piece yourself?"

"Because, my dear father, I think it may be wrong to

restrain the amiable spirit of self-denial evinced by the child."

"Then you are mistaken, Miss Dulan; and recollect that it is very irreverent in a young lady to express an opinion at variance with the spirit of what her father has just said."

Elizabeth meekly and in silence went to the pantry and cut a piece of cake, which she carefully wrapped up and gave to Willie for his mother. Willie received it with an humble and deprecatory look, as if he felt the whole responsibility and weight of the reproof that had fallen upon his cousin.

One Christmas eve, when Willie was above seven years old, the widow and her son were sitting by the cottage hearth. The closed shutters, drawn curtains, clean hearth and bright fire threw an air of great comfort over the room. Mrs. Dulan sat at her little work-table, setting the finishing stitches in a fine linen shirt, the last of a dozen that she had been making for the doctor.

The snowstorm that had been raging all day long had subsided, though occasionally the light and drifted snow would be blown up from the ground by a gust of wind against the windows of the house. "Poor boy," said the widow, looking at her son, "you look tired and sleepy; go to bed, Willie."

"Oh! dear mamma, I am not tired, and I could not sleep at all while you are up alone and at work. Please let me stay up—but I will go to bed if you say so," added he, submissively.

"Come and kiss me, darling. Yes, Willie, you may stay up as long as you like. I will go to bed myself," added she, mentally, "so as not to keep the poor boy up."

"Well, Willie, I will tell you a story, darling, which will amuse you, while I sew."

Just at this moment the sound of carriage wheels, followed immediately by a jump from the box, and a smart rap at the door, caused the widow to start hastily from her seat. The door was opened, and Jake, the big black coachman of the old doctor, made his appearance, a heavy cloak and a large muffling hood hanging over his arm.

"Marm," said he, "it has clarred off beautiful, and massa has sent the carriage arter you, and he says how he would have sent it afore, but how the roads was blocked up with snowdrifts. Me and Pontius Pilate, and Massa John, has been all the arternoon a clarring it away, and I thinks, marm, if you don't come to-night, how the road will be as bad as ever to-morrow morning, with this wind a-blowing about the snow. Miss Lizzy has sent this hood of hern, and massa has sent this big cloth cloak of hizzen, so that you needn't ketch cold."

Mrs. Dulan did not immediately reply, but looked at Willie, and seemed to reflect:

Jake added:

"I hopes you'll come, marm, for massa and Miss Lizzy and Massa John has quite set their heads on having you with them to spend Christmas, and Massa John told me to tell you how he had bagged a fine passel of water-

fowl and wild turkeys, and I myself has made a trap for Massa Willie to catch snowbirds."

"Yes, we will go," said Mrs. Dulan. "Do me the favor, Jacob, to pour a pitcher of water on that fire, while I tie on Willie's cloak and mittens."

In twenty minutes more, Willie was seated on his uncle's knees, by his bright fireside, and his mother sat conversing with John and Elizabeth, and a few neighbors whom the inclemency of the weather had not deterred from dropping in to spend Christmas eve. The old housekeeper stood at the buffet, cutting up seedcake, and pouring out elder wine, which was soon passed round to the company.

That Christmas was a gorgeous morning. The sun arose and lit up into flashing splendor the icy glories of the landscape. From every roof and eave, from every bough and bush, dropped millions of blazing jewels. Earth wore a gorgeous bridal dress, bedecked with diamonds. Within the doctor's house everything was comfortable as you could wish. A rousing fire of hickory wood roared upon the hearth, an abundant breakfast of coffee, tea, buckwheat cakes, muffins, eggs, wild fowls, oysters, etc., etc., smoked upon the board. The family were all gathered in the breakfast-room. The doctor was serving out eggnog from a capacious bowl upon the sideboard.

"Cousin Elizabeth," said little Willie, taking her hand and leading her away to the sofa, "what do ladies love?"

"What do ladies love? Why, Willie, what a queer question."

"Yes, but tell me what do ladies love?"

"Why, their papas, of course, and their brothers, and their relations; it would not be decorous to love any one else," said the prim maiden.

"Oh, you don't know what I mean; I mean what do ladies love to have? You know boys like to have kites and marbles, and traps to catch snowbirds, and picture books, and half-pence and such things. Now what do ladies love to have?"

"Oh, now I understand you. Why, we like to have a good assortment of crewels and floss to work tapestry with, and a quantity of bright-colored silk to embroider with, and——"

"Oh, that's what you like, Cousin Elizabeth; but mamma doesn't work samplers," said the boy, with a dash of pettish contempt in his tone. "Uncle has given me a bright new shilling for a Christmas gift, to do what I please with, and I want to get something with it for poor, dear mamma."

"La! child, you can get nothing of any account with a shilling."

"Can't I?" said he, and his little face fell for an instant, but soon lighting up, he exclaimed: "Oh, ho! Cousin Elizabeth, I am brighter than you are, this time. A silver thimble is a very little thing, and can be bought with a shilling, I am sure; so I will buy one for mamma.

Poor mamma has an old brass one now, which cankers her finger."

"Here, Willie," said Elizabeth, "I have not paid you my Christmas gift, and you caught me, you know; take this shilling, and now run and ask your uncle to take you to the village with him when he goes, and then you can buy your thimble. You have enough to get one now."

Willie thanked his cousin with a hearty embrace, and ran off to do as she advised him. The family now sat down to breakfast, after which they all went to church, where the doctor performed divine service. A large party of friends and neighbors returned with them to dinner, and the remainder of the day was spent in hilarity and innocent enjoyment.

The next day the thimble was purchased, as agreed upon, and little Willie kept it a profound secret from his mother, until the first evening on which they found themselves at home, in their little parlor, when the candle was lit, and the little stand drawn to the fire, the workbox opened, and the old brass thimble put on. Then little Willie, glowing with blissful excitement, put his hand in his pocket to find his present. It was not there. He searched the other pocket, then his cap, then shook his cloak and looked about the carpet. Alarmed now, he opened the door and was going out, when his mother called to him.

"What is the matter, Willie? Where are you going? What have you lost?"

"Nothing much, mother; I am only going out a minute," and he closed the door, and began an almost hopeless search by the moonlight for his lost treasure. Up and down the walk he searched without finding it. He opened the gate, and peeping and peering about, wandered up the road, until his little feet and limbs got wet in the soft snow, and his hands became benumbed; when, feeling convinced that it was lost, he sat down and burst into a passionate fit of weeping. Let no one feel surprise or contempt at this. In this little affair of the thimble there had been disinterested love, self-sacrifice, anticipated joy, disappointment and despair, though all expended on a cheap thimble. Yet, Willie was but seven years old, and "thought as a child, felt as a child, understood as a child." I am a grown-up child now. and have had many troubles, but the most acute sorrow I ever felt was the death of my pet pigeon, when I was seven years old.

It was long before the storm in his little bosom subsided, but when at last it did, he turned to go home; he would not go before, lest he might grieve his mother with the sight of his tears. At last, weary and half-frozen, he opened the cottage gate and met his mother coming to look for him, and she, who always spoke most gently to him, and for whose dear sake she was suffering, now by a sad chance, and out of her fright and vexation, sharply rebuked him and hurried him off to bed. "If dear mamma had known, she would not have scolded me so, though," was his last thought as he sank

into a feverish sleep. The next morning when Mrs. Dulan arose, the heavy breathing, and bright flush upon the cheek of her boy, caught her attention, and roused her fears for his health. As she gazed, a sharp expression of pain contracted his features and he awoke. Feebly stretching out his arms to embrace her, he said:

"Oh, mamma, Willie is so sick, and his breast hurts so bad."

The child had caught the pleurisy.

It was late at night before medical assistance could be procured from a distant village. In the meantime the child's illness had fearfully progressed; and when at last the physician arrived, and examined him, he could give no hopes of his recovery. Language cannot depict the anguish of the mother as she bent over the couch of her suffering boy, and, if a grain could have increased the burden of her grief, it would have been felt in the memory of the few words of harsh rebuke when he had returned half-frozen and heavy-hearted from his fruitless search after the thimble, for the kind Elizabeth had arrived and explained the incident of the night.

* * * * * * * *

It was midnight of the ninth day. Willie had lain in a stupor for a whole day and night previous. His mother stood by his bed; she neither spoke nor wept, but her face wore the expression of acute suffering. Her eyes were strained with an earnest, anxious, agonized gaze upon the deathly countenance of the boy. Old Dr. Dulan entered the room at this moment, and looking down at

the child, and taking his thin, cold hand in his own, felt his pulse, and turning to the wretched mother, who had fixed her anxious gaze imploringly upon him, he said:

"Hannah, my dear sister—— But, oh, God! I cannot deceive you," and abruptly left the room.

"Elizabeth," said he to his daughter, who was sitting by the parlor fire, "go into the next room and remain with your aunt, and if anything occurs summon me at once; and, John, saddle my horse quickly, and ride over to Mrs. Caply and tell her to come over here."

Mrs. Caply was the layer-out of the dead for the neighborhood.

How tediously wore that dreary night away in the sickroom, where the insensible child was watched by his mother and her friend! The flickering taper, which both forgot to snuff, would fitfully flare up and reveal the watchers, the bed, and the prostrate form of the pale, stiff, motionless boy, with his eyes flared back with a fixed and horrid stare. In the parlor, a party equally silent and gloomy kept their vigil. Dr. Dulan, his son and the old woman, whose fearful errand made her very presence a horror, formed the group. The old woman at last, weary at holding her tongue so long, broke silence by saying: "I always thought that child would never be raised, sir—he was so smart and clever, and so dutiful to his ma. He was too good for this world, sir. How long has he been sick, sir?"

"Little more than a week; but I beg you will be silent, lest you disturb them in the next room."

"Yes, sir, certainly. Sick people ought to be kept quiet, though perhaps that don't much matter when they are dying. Well, poor little fellow; he was a pretty child, and will look lovely in his shroud and cap, and——"

"Hush!" exclaimed John Dulan, in a tone so stern that the woman was constrained to be silent.

Daylight was now peeping in at the windows. The doctor arose, put out the candles, opened the shutters, stirred the fire, and went into the next room. The widow was sitting in the same place, holding one of the boy's hands between her own, her head bowed down upon it. The doctor looked at the child; his eyes were now closed, as if in sleep. He laid his hand upon his brow, and bending down, intently gazed upon him. The child opened his eyes slowly. Passing quickly round the bed, the doctor laid his hand upon the recumbent head and said: "Look up, Hannah, your child is restored." With an ecstatic expression of gratitude and joy, the mother started to her feet, and gazed upon her boy.

"Kiss me, mamma," said Willie, opening his gentle eyes, in which beamed a quiet look of recognition and love. The mother kissed her child repeatedly and fervently, while exclamations of profound gratitude to Heaven escaped her. The doctor went to the window, and threw open the shutters. The rising sun poured its light into the room, and lit it up with splendor.

I must transport you now, in imagination, over a few years of time and a few miles of country, and take you into a splendid drawing-room, in the handsome court-

house of the Delany's, which, you remember, I described in the first part of this story, situated near the town of Richmond. On a luxurious sofa, in this superb room, reclined a most beautiful woman. Her golden hair divided above a high and classic brow, fell, flashing and glittering, upon her white bosom like sunbeams of snow. Her eyes—but who can describe those glorious eyes of living sapphire? Sapphire! Compare her eloquent eyes to soulless gems? Her eyes! Why, when their serious light was turned upon you, you would feel spellbound, entranced, as by a strain of rich and solemn music, and when their merry glance caught yours, you'd think there could not be a grief or a sin on earth! But the greatest charm in that fascinating countenance was the lips, small, full, red, their habitual expression being that of heavenly serenity and goodness.

Bending over the arm of the sofa, his head resting upon his hand, was a young man; his eyes earnestly, anxiously, pleadingly fixed upon the face of his companion, in whose ear, in a full, rich, and passionate tone, he was pouring a tale of love, hopeless almost to despair. The girl listened with a saddened countenance, and turning her large eyes, humid with tears, upon his face, she spoke:

"Richard, I am grieved beyond measure. Oh, cousin, I do not merit your deep and earnest love. I am an ingrate! I do not return it."

"Do you dislike me?"

"Oh, no, no, no, indeed I do not—I esteem and respect you; nay, more, I love you as a brother."

"Then, dear, dearest Alice, since I am honored with your esteem, if not blessed with your love, give me your hand—be my wife—and ultimately perhaps——"

"Horrible!" exclaimed the young girl, leaving the room abruptly.

"What the d—l does that fool mean?" exclaimed Richard Delany, as an angry flush passed over his face. "One would think I had insulted her. Colonel Delany's penniless dependent should receive with more humility, if not with more gratitude, an offer of marriage from his heir. But I see how it is. She loves that beggarly Dulan—that wretched usher. But, death—death to the poverty-stricken wretch, if he presume to cross my path!" and the clenched fists, livid complexion, and grinding teeth gave fearful testimony to the deadly hatred that had sprung up in his bosom.

At this moment Colonel Delany entered the room, and taking a seat, said:

"Richard, I have somewhat to say to you, and I wish you seriously to attend. You know that I am your best, your most disinterested friend, and that your welfare lies nearer to my heart than aught else earthly. Well, I have observed, with much regret, the increased interest you seem to take in your cousin—your passion for her, in fact. These things are easily arrested in the commencement, and they must be arrested. You can do it, and you must do it! I have other views for you. Prom-

ise me, my son, that you will give up all thoughts of Alice."

Richard, who had remained in deep thought during his father's address, now looked up and replied:

"But, my father, Alice is a very beautiful, very amiable, very intellectual——"

"Beggar!"

"Father!"

"Unbend that brow, sir! nor dare to address your parent in that insolent tone! And now, sir, once for all, let us come to the point, and understand each other perfectly. Should you persist in your addresses to Alice, should you finally marry her, not a shilling, not a penny of your father's wealth shall fall on an ungrateful son."

Richard reflected profoundly a moment, and then replied:

"Fear of the loss of wealth would not deter me from any step. But the loss of my father would be an evil, I could never risk to encounter. I will obey you, sir."

"I am not satisfied," thought the old gentleman, as he left his son, after a few more moments of conversation. "I am not satisfied. I will watch them closely, and in the course of the day speak to Alice."

An opportunity soon offered. He found himself alone with Alice, after tea.

"Alice," he commenced, "I wish to make a confidant of you;" and he proceeded to unfold to her, at some length, his ambitious projects for his son, and concluded by giving her to understand, pretty distinctly, that he

wished his son to select a wealthy bride, and that any other one would never be received by him as his daughter.

"I think I understand, although I cannot entirely sympathize with you, my dear uncle," said Alice, in a low, trembling tone. "All this has been said for my edification. That your mind may be perfectly at rest on this subject, I must say what may be deemed presumptuous: I would not, could not marry your son, either with or without your consent, or under any circumstances whatever."

"Alice! my dear Alice! How could you suppose I made any allusion to you? Oh! Alice, Alice!"

And the old man talked himself into a fit of remorse, sure enough. He believed Alice, although he could not believe his son. The old gentleman's uneasiness was not entirely dispelled; for, although Alice might not now love Richard, yet time could make a great change in her sentiments.

Alice Raymond, the orphan niece of Colonel Delany, was the daughter of an officer in the British army. Mr. Raymond was the youngest son of an old, wealthy and haughty family in Dorsetshire, England. At a very early age he married the youngest sister of Colonel Delany. Having nothing but his pay, all the miseries of an improvident marriage fell upon the young couple. The same hour that gave existence to Alice, deprived her of her mother. The facilities to ambition offered by America, and the hope of distracting his grief, induced

Mr. Raymond to dispose of his commission, and embark for the Western World. Another object which, though the last named, was the first in deciding him to cross the Atlantic. This object was to place his little Alice in the arms of her maternal grandmother, the elder Mrs. Delany, then a widow, and a resident under the roof of her son, Colonel Delany. A few weeks after the sailing of the ship in which, with his infant daughter, Mr. Raymond took passage, the smallpox broke out on board and he was one of its earliest victims.

With his dying breath he consigned Alice to the care of the captain of the ship, a kind-hearted man, who undertook to convey the poor babe to her grandmother. On the arrival of the infant at the mansion of Colonel Delany, a new bereavement awaited her. Mrs. Delany, whose health had been declining ever since her settlement in her new home, was fast sinking to the grave. Colonel Delany, however, received the orphan infant with the greatest tenderness. Sixteen years of affectionate care had given him a father's place in the heart of Alice. and a father's influence over her. Within the last year the sunshine of Alice's life had been clouded.

Richard Delany, the only son and heir of Colonel Delany, had been sent to England at the age of fifteen to receive a college education. After remaining eight years abroad, the last year of his absence being spent in making the grand tour, he returned to his adopted country and his father's house. He was soon attracted by the beauty and grace of Alice. I say by her beauty and

grace, because the moral and intellectual worth of the young girl he had not the taste to admire, even had he, at this early period of his acquaintance with her, an opportunity to judge. The attentions of Richard Delany to his cousin were not only extremely distressing to her, but highly displeasing to his father, who had formed, as we have seen, the most ambitious projects for his son. Richard Delany was not far wrong in his conjecture concerning the young usher, who was no other than our old friend William Dulan, little Willie, who had now grown to man's estate, the circumstances of whose introduction to the Delany family I must now proceed to explain.

To pass briefly over the events of William Dulan's childhood and youth. At the age of ten years he entered, as a pupil, the collegiate school over which Dr. Dulan presided, where he remained until his nineteenth year. It had been the wish of William Dulan and his mother that he should take holy orders, and he was about to enter a course of theological study under the direction of his uncle when an event occurred which totally altered the plan of his life. This event was the death of Dr. Dulan, his kind uncle and benefactor. All thoughts of the church had now to be relinquished, and present employment, by which to support his mother, to be sought. * * * It was twelve o'clock at night, about three months after the death of Dr. Dulan. The mother of William, by her hearth, still plied her needle, now the only means of their support. Her son sat by her side, as

of old. He had been engaged some hours in reading to her. At length, throwing down the book, he exclaimed:

"Dearest, dearest mother, lay by that work. It shames my manhood, it breaks my heart, to see you thus coining your very health and life into pence for our support; while I! oh, mother, I feel like a human vampire, preying upon your slender strength!"

The widow looked into the face of her son, saw the distress, the almost agony of his countenance, and, quickly folding up her work, said gently:

"I am not sewing so much from necessity, now, dear William, as because I was not sleepy, being so much interested in your book."

The morning succeeding this little scene, William, as was his wont, arose early, and going into the parlor, made up the fire, hung the kettle on, and was engaged in setting the room in order, when his mother entered, who, observing his occupation, said:

"Ever since your return from school, William, you have anticipated me in this morning labor. You must now give it up, my son—I do not like to see you perform these menial offices."

"No service performed for my mother can be menial," said Willie, giving her a fond smile.

"My darling son!"

After breakfast William took up his hat and went out. It was three hours before he returned. His face was beaming with happiness, as he held an open letter in his hand.

"See, mother, dear, kind Providence has opened a way for us at last."

"What is it, my son?" said the widow, anxiously.

"Mr. Keene, you know, who left this neighborhood about three years ago, went to —— County and established a school, which has succeeded admirably. He is in want of an assistant, and has written to me, offering four hundred dollars a year for my services in his institution."

"And you will have to leave me, William!"

These words escaped the widow, with a deep sigh, and without reflection. She added in an instant, with assumed cheerfulness:

"Yes, of course—so I would have you do."

A month from this conversation William Dulan was established in his new home, in the family of Mr. Keene, the principal of Bay Grove Academy, near Richmond.

The first meeting of William Dulan and Alice Raymond took place under the following circumstances. On the arrival of Richard Delany at home, his father, who kept up the good old customs of his English ancestors, gave a dinner and ball in honor of his son's coming of age. All the gentry of his own and the adjoining counties accepted invitations to attend. Among the guests was William Dulan. He was presented to Miss Raymond, the young hostess of the evening, by Mr. Keene. Young Dulan was at first dazzled by the transcendent beauty of her face, and the airy elegance of her form; then, won by the gentleness of her manners, the elevation

of her mind, and the purity of her heart. One ball in a country neighborhood generally puts people in the humor of the thing, and is frequently followed by many others. It was so in this instance, and William Dulan and Alice Raymond met frequently in scenes of gayety, where neither took an active part in the festivities. A more intimate acquaintance produced a mutual and just estimation of each other's character, and preference soon warmed into love.

From the moment in which the jealous fears of Richard Delany were aroused, he resolved to throw so much coldness and hauteur in his manner toward that young gentleman as should banish him from the house. This, however, did not effect the purpose for which it was designed, and he finally determined to broach the subject to his father. Old Colonel Delany, whose "optics" were so very "keen" to spy out the danger of his son's forming a mésalliance, was stone blind when such a misfortune threatened Alice, liked the young man very much, and could see nothing out of the way in his attentions to his niece, and finally refused to close his doors against him at his son's instance. While this conversation was going on, the summer vacation approached, and William made arrangements to spend them with his mother.

One morning William Dulan sat at his desk. His face was pale, his spirits depressed. He loved Alice, oh! how madly. He could not forego the pleasure of her society; yet how was all this to end? Long years must elapse before, if ever, he could be in a situation to ask the

hand of Alice. With his head bowed upon his hand, he remained lost in thought.

"Mr. Dulan, may our class come up? We know our lessons," said a youthful voice at his elbow.

"Go to your seats, boys," said a rich, melodious, kind voice; "I wish to have a few moments' conversation with Mr. Dulan," and Dr. Keene, the principal, stood by his side.

"My dear Dulan," said he, "you are depressed, but I bring you that which will cheer your spirits. I have decided to give up my school here into your sole charge if you will accept it. I have received, through the influence of some of my political friends, a lucrative and permanent appointment under the government, the nature of which I will explain to you by and by. I think of closing my connection with this school about the end of the next term. What say you? Will you be my successor?"

Dulan started to his feet, seized both the hands of his friend, pressed them fervently, and would have thanked him, but utterance failed. Dr. Keene insisted on his resuming his seat, and then added:

"The income of the school amounts to twelve hundred dollars a year. The schoolhouse, dwelling-house, with its outbuildings and numerous improvements upon the premises, go into the bargain. Yes, Dulan, I have known your secret long," said he, smiling good-humoredly, "and sincerely, though silently, commiserated the difficulties of your position; and I assure you, Dulan, that the greatest

pleasure I felt in receiving my appointment was in the opportunity it gave me of making you and Alice happy. Stop, stop, Dulan, let me talk," laughed Keene, as William opened a battery of gratitude upon him. "It is now near the end of July. I should like to see you installed here on the first of September. The August vacation will give you an opportunity of making all your arrangements. I must now leave you to your labors."

Every boy that asked to go out went out that day. Every boy that said his task got praised, and every boy that missed his lesson got blamed. The day was awfully tedious for all that, but evening came at last, and the school was dismissed. William, after spending an unusually long time in the "outward adorning," hastened with a joy-beaming countenance to the home of his Alice. In the full flow of his joy he was met by a sudden disappointment. The servant who met him at the door informed him that Colonel Delany, Miss Raymond and Mr. Delany had set off for Richmond, with the intention of staying a couple of weeks. Crestfallen, William turned from the door. This was only a momentary disappointment, however, and soon his spirits rose, and he joyfully anticipated the time of the Delany's return. They were to be back in time for the approaching examination and exhibition at Bay Grove Academy; and in preparing his pupils for this event, William Dulan found ample employment for his time and thoughts. I will not weary you with a description of the exhibition. It passed off in that school pretty much as it does in

others. The Delanys, however, had not returned in time to be present, nay, the very last day of William's stay had dawned, yet they had not arrived. William had written to his mother that he would be home on a stated day, and not even for the delight of meeting the mistress of his heart, the period of whose return was now uncertain, would he disappoint her. William was engaged in packing his trunk, when Dr. Keene, again the harbinger of good tidings, entered his room.

"My dear Dulan," said he, "I have come to tell you that the Delanys have arrived. You will have an opportunity of spending your last evening with Alice."

William shuffled his things into his trunk, pressed down the lid, locked it, and, hastily bidding his friend good-evening, took his hat and hurried from the house. Being arrived at Colonel Delany's, he was shown into the drawing-room, and was delighted to find Alice its sole occupant. The undisguised joy with which she received him left scarcely a doubt upon his mind as to the reception of his intended proposals. After a few mutual inquiries respecting health, friends, and so forth, William took her white hand in his, and said, or attempted to say —I know not what—it stuck in his throat—and he remained merely silent, holding the hand of Alice. There is something so extremely difficult about making a premeditated declaration of love. It is much easier when it can be surprised from a man. William knew the moments were very precious. He knew that Colonel Delany or his son might be expected to enter at any moment, and

there would be an end of opportunity for a month or six weeks to come; yet there he sat, holding her hand, the difficulty becoming greater every minute, while the crimson cheek of Alice burned with a deeper blush. At length footsteps approached. William heard them, and becoming alarmed, hastily, hurriedly, but fervently and passionately exclaimed:

"Alice, I love you with my whole heart, mind and strength. I love you as we are commanded only to love God. Dearest Alice, will you become my wife?"

"Miss Raymond," said Richard Delany, entering at this moment, "my father desires your presence instantly in his study on business of the utmost moment to yourself. Mr. Dulan, I hope, will excuse me, as we have but just arrived, and many matters crave my attention. Good-evening, sir," and, bowing haughtily, he attended his cousin from the room. William Dulan arose and took his hat to go.

"Farewell, Mr. Dulan," said Alice, kindly, "if we should not meet again before your departure."

"Farewell, sweet Alice," murmured William Dulan as he left the house.

* * * * * * *

It was a glorious Sabbath morning early in August. The widow's cottage gleamed in the dark bosom of the wood like a gem in the tresses of beauty. Everything wore its brightest aspect. The windows of the little parlor were open, and the songs of birds and the perfume of flowers were wafted through them. But the lit-

tle breakfast-table, with its snowy cloth and its one plate, cup and saucer, looked almost piteous from its solitude. Upon the clean white coverlet of the bed sat the widow's little black bonnet and shawl, prayer-book, and clean pocket handkerchief, folded with its sprig of lavender. It was Communion Sunday, and the widow would not miss going to church on any account. She dispatched her breakfast quickly—poor thing! she had not much appetite. She had sat up half the night previous, awaiting the arrival of William, but he had not come; and a man from the village had informed her that the mail-stage had arrived on the night previous without any passengers. As the stage would not pass again for a week, the widow could not expect to see or hear from her son for that length of time. After putting away her breakfast things, she donned her bonnet and shawl, and, taking her prayer-book, opened the door to go out. What a pleasant sight met her eyes. A neat one-horse carriage, or rather cart, stood at the door—her son was just alighting from it. In another instant he had clasped his mother in his arms.

"Oh! my William! my William! I am so glad to see you," exclaimed the delighted mother, bursting into tears. "Oh, but this is so joyful, so unexpected, dear William! I looked for you, indeed, last night; but, as you did not come, I gave you up, unwillingly enough, for a week. But come in, darling; you've not breakfasted, I know."

"No, dear mother, because I wished to breakfast with you; but let me give something to the horse, first, and

you sit in the door, dear mother—I do not want to lose sight of you a moment, while waiting on Rosinante."

"Never mind, William, old Jake can do that. Here, Jake," said she, as the old servant approached, "take charge of Master William's horse." Then turning to William, she said: "John sends old Jake over every morning to help me."

"Ah! How are Cousins John and Elizabeth?"

"Oh, very hearty. We shall see them this morning at church."

"I did not come in the stage yesterday, mother," said William, as they took their seats at the breakfast table, "because I had purchased this light wagon and horse for you to ride to church in, and I came down in it. I reached the river last night, but could not cross. The old ferryman had gone to bed, and would not rise. Well, after breakfast, dear mother, I shall have the pleasure of driving you to church in your own carriage!" added William, smiling.

"Ah! William, what a blessing you are to me, my dear son; but it must have taken the whole of your quarter's salary to buy this for me?" And she glanced, with pain, at his rusty and threadbare suit of black, and at his napless hat.

"Ah, mother, I was selfish after all, and deserve no credit, for I laid the money out in the way which would give myself the most pleasure. But, see, here is old Jake to tell us the carriage is ready. Come, mother, I will hand you in, and as we go along I will unfold to you

some excellent news, which I am dying to deliver." So saying, he placed his mother carefully in the little carriage, and seating himself beside her drove off, leaving old Jake in charge of the house.

"There is plenty of time, dear mother; so we will drive slowly, that we may talk with more comfort.

William then proceeded to relate, at large, all that had taken place during his residence at Bay Grove—not omitting his love for Alice, of whom he gave a glowing description; nor the bright prospects which the kindness of Dr. Keene opened before him. Then he described the beautiful dwelling which would become vacant on the removal of Dr. Keene's family, which was expected to take place some time during the coming autumn. To this dwelling, he intended to remove his mother, and hoped to bear his bride.

To all this the mother listened with grateful joy. At the church, William Dulan met again his cousins, John and Elizabeth, who expressed their delight at the meeting and insisted that William and his mother should return with them to dinner. This, however, both mother and son declined, as they wished to spend the day at home together.

William Dulan spent a month with his mother, and when the moment arrived that was to terminate his visit, he said to her:

"Now, dear mother, cheer up! This parting is so much better than our last parting. Now, I am going to prepare a beautiful home for you, and when I come at

Christmas, it will be for the purpose of carrying you back with me."

The widow gave her son a beaming look of love.

With a "Heaven be with you, my dearest mother," and "God bless you, my best son," they parted. They parted to meet no more on earth.

Let us now return to the mansion of Colonel Delany, and learn the nature of that "matter of the utmost moment to herself," that had summoned Alice so inopportunely from the side of her lover.

* * * * * * *

On reaching the study of her uncle, Miss Raymond found him in deep consultation with an elderly gentleman in black. Various packets of papers were before him—an open letter was held in his hand. He arose to meet Alice, as she advanced into the room, and taking her hand with grave respect, said:

"Lady Hilden, permit me to congratulate you on your accession to your title and estates."

"Sir! uncle!" exclaimed Alice, gazing at him with the utmost astonishment, scarcely conscious whether she was waking or dreaming.

"Yes, my dear, it is true. Your grandfather—old Lord Hilden—departed this life on the sixth of last March. His only living son survived him but a few weeks, and died without issue, and the title and estates, with a rent-roll of eight thousand pounds per annum, has descended, in right of your father, to yourself!"

"I shall have so much to give to William!" involuntarily exclaimed Alice.

"Madam!" exclaimed Colonel Delany in surprise.

Alice blushed violently at having thought aloud. "Dear sir," said she, "I did not know what I was saying."

"Ah, well, I suppose you are a little startled with this sudden news," said the Colonel, smiling; "but now it is necessary for you to examine with us some of these papers. Ah, I crave your pardon, Mr. Reynard—Lady Hilden, this is Mr. Reynard, late solicitor to your deceased grandfather, the Baron——"

Great was the excitement in the neighborhood when it was noised abroad that Alice Raymond had become a baroness, in her own right, and the possessor of a large estate in England. And when, for the first time since her accession to her new dignities, she appeared at church, in deep mourning, every eye was turned upon her, and she almost sank beneath the gaze of so many people.

In the height of the "nine days' wonder," William Dulan returned, and was greeted by the news from every quarter.

"Oh, Alice—lost! lost! lost to me forever!" exclaimed he, in agony, as he paced, with hurried strides, up and down the floor of his little room. "Oh, my mother, if it were not for thee, I should pray that this wretched heart of mine would soon be stilled in death."

If any human being will look candidly upon the events

of his own life, and the history of his own heart, with a view to examine the causes of suffering, he will be constrained to admit that by far the greater portion of his miseries have originated in misapprehension, and might have been easily prevented or cured by a little calm investigation. It was so with William Dulan, who was at this moment suffering the most acute agony of mind he ever felt in his life, from a misconception, a doubt, which a ten minutes' walk to the house of Coloney Delany, and a ten minutes' talk with Alice, would have dissipated forever.

If Richard Delany was anxious before to wed his cousin for love, he was now half crazy to take that step by which both love and ambition would be gratified to the utmost.

He actually loved her ten times as much as formerly. The "beggar" was beautiful, but the baroness was bewitching! Spurred on, then, he determined to move heaven, earth and the other place, if necessary, to accomplish his object. He beset Lady Hilden with the most earnest prayers, and protestations, and entreaties, reminding her that he loved and wooed her before the dawn of her prosperity, and appealed to her for the distinterestedness of his passion. But all in vain. He even besought his father to use his influence with Alice in his favor. Colonel Delany, his objections being all now removed, urged his niece, by her affection, by her compassion, and, finally, after some delicate hesitation, by her gratitude, to

accept the proffered hand of his son. But Alice was steadfast in her rejection.

"A change had come o'er the spirit of her dream!"

Alas, alas! that a change of fortune should work such a change of spirit! Alice Raymond was now Lady Hilden. Her once holy, loving, meek blue eyes were now splendid with light and joy. Upon cheek and lip, once so delicately blooming, now glanced and glowed a rich, bright crimson. Her once softly falling step had become firm, elastic and stately. "A peeress in my own right," was the thought that sent a spasmodic joy to the heart of Alice. I am sorry she was not more philosophical, more exalted, but I cannot help it, so it was; and if Alice "put on airs," it must not be charged upon her biographer.

Time sped on. A rumor of an approaching marriage between Mr. Richard Delany and Lady Hilden was industriously circulated, and became the general topic of conversation in the neighborhood. To avoid hearing it talked of, William Dulan sedulously kept out of company. He had never seen Alice since she became Lady Hilden. Dr. Keene had removed with his family from Bay Grove, and the principal government and emolument of the school had devolved upon young Dulan. The Christmas holidays were at hand, and he resolved to take advantage of the opportunity offered by them, to remove his mother to Bay Grove. On the last evening of his stay, something in the circumstance brought back forcibly to his mind his last conversation with Alice—that

conversation had also taken place on the eve of a journey; and the association of ideas awakened, together with the belief that he would never again have an opportunity of beholding her, irresistibly impelled him to seek an interview with Alice.

Twilight was fast fading into night. Lady Hilden stood alone, gazing out from the window of her uncle's drawing-room. She had changed again, since we saw her last. There was something of sorrow, or bitterness, in the compressed or quivering lip. Her eye was bright as ever, but it was the brightness of the icicle glancing in the winter sun—it was soon quenched in tears, and as she gazed out upon the gloomy mountain, naked forest, and frozen lake, she murmured: "I used to love summer and day so much; now——" [A servant entered with lights. "Take them away," said Alice. She was obeyed.]—"the dark soul in the dark scene—there is almost repose in that harmony."

"Mr. Dulan," said the servant, reappearing at the door, and Mr. William Dulan followed the announcement.

"You may bring in the light, now," said Alice.

"Will Lady Hilden accept congratulations, offered at so late a period?" said William Dulan, with a respectful bow.

Alice, who had been startled out of her self-possession, replied only by a bow.

"I was about to leave this neighborhood for a short time; but could not do so without calling to bid you

farewell, fearing you might be gone to England before I return." William Dulan's voice was beginning to quiver.

"I have no present intention of going to England."

"No? Such a report is rife in the neighborhood."

"One is not chargeable with the reports of the neighborhood."

Alice said this in a peculiar tone, as she glanced at the sorrow-stricken visage of the young man.

A desultory conversation ensued, after which William Dulan arose to take his leave, which he did in a choking, inaudible voice. As he turned to leave the room, his ghastly face and unsteady step attested, in language not to be misunderstood, the acuteness and intensity of his suffering. Alice did not misunderstand it. She uttered one word, in a low and trembling tone:

"William!"

He was at her side in an instant. A warm blush glowing over her bosom, cheek and brow, her eyes were full of tears, as she raised them to his face, eloquent with all a maiden may not speak.

"Angel! I love! I adore thee!" exclaimed the youth, sinking at her feet.

"Love me, William, only love me, and let us both adore the Being who hath given us to each other."

* * * * * * *

It was a cold night on the shores of the ice-bound Rappahannock. A storm of wind and snow that had been fiercely raging all day long, at length subsided. At a low cabin, which served the threefold purposes of post-

office, ferry-house and tavern, an old gray-haired man was nodding over a smoldering fire. His slumbers were disturbed by the blast of a stage horn and wheels of the coach, which soon stopped before the door.

Two travelers alighted and entered the cabin. The old ferryman arose to receive them.

"Any chance of crossing to-night, Uncle Ben?" inquired the younger traveler.

"He-he! hardly, Mr. William; the river has been closed for a week," chuckling at the thought that he should be saved the trouble of taking the coach across.

"Oh, of course, I did not expect to go on the boat; I was thinking of crossing on the ice."

"I think that would scarcely be safe, Mr. William; the weather has moderated a great deal since nightfall, and I rather think the ice may be weak."

"Pooh! nonsense! fiddle-de-dee!" exclaimed the other traveler, testily; "do you think, old driveler, that a few hours of moderate weather could weaken, effectually, the ice of a river that has been hard frozen for a week? Why, at this moment a coach might be driven across with perfect safety!"

"I shouldn't like to try it, though, sir," said the driver, who entered at this moment.

"The gentleman can try it, if he likes," continued the old man, with a grin, "but I do hopes Mr. Dulan won't."

"Why, the ice will certainly bear a foot-passenger safely across," smiled William Dulan.

"I dare say it may; but, at any rate, I wouldn't try it,

Master William—'specially as it's a long, dark, slushy road between here and the widow's."

"Why, Uncle Ben, do you think I am a young chicken, to be killed by wetting my feet?" asked William, laughing. "Besides, at this very moment, my good mother is waiting for me, and has a blazing fire, a pot of strong coffee, and a bowl of oysters, in readiness. I would not disappoint her, or myself, for a good deal."

"If it were not for this confounded lameness in my feet, I would not stop at this vile hole to-night," said the elder traveler, who was no other than Richard Delany, whom imperative business had called to this part of the country, and who had thus become, very reluctantly, the traveling companion of William Dulan.

"Nobody asked you, sir," exclaimed the old man, who did not seek popularity.

William Dulan, who by this time had resumed his cloak, and received a lighted lantern from the old ferryman, took his way to the river, accompanied by the latter. Arrived at its edge, he turned, shook hands with the old man, and stepped upon the ice. Old Ben remained, with his eyes anxiously strained after the light of the lantern as it was borne across the river. It was already half-way across—suddenly a breaking sound, a fearful shriek, a quenched light, and all was dark and still upon the surface of the ice; but beneath, a young, strong life was battling fiercely with death. Ah! who can tell the horrors of that frightful struggle in the dark, cold, ice-bound prison of the waters?

The old man turned away, aghast with horror, and his eyes fell upon the countenance of Richard Delany, which was now lit up with demoniac joy, as he muttered between his teeth:

"Good, good, good! Alice shall be mine now!"

* * * * * * * *

It was night in the peaceful cottage of the widow. All the little *agremens* her son had pictured were there. A little round-table, covered with a snowy cloth, stood in readiness. An easy-chair was turned with its back to the fire, and on it a dressing-gown, and before it lay a pair of soft, warm slippers. The restless, joyous, anxious mother was reading over, for the twentieth time, her son's last letter, in which he promised to be home, punctually, on that evening. Hours flew on, but he did not come. At length, one o'clock struck, and startled the widow from her meditative posture. "I must go to bed —I must not look pale with watching, to-morrow, and alarm my good son. It is just as it was before—he cannot get across the river to-night. I shall see him early to-morrow." Removing the things from about the fire, and setting the room in the nicest order, the widow retired to bed.

She rose early in the morning, to prepare a good breakfast for her son. "He shall have buckwheat cakes this morning; he is so fond of them," said she, as she busied herself in preparation.

Everything was in readiness, yet William came not. The morning passed on. The mother grew impatient.

"It is certainly high time he was here now," said she; "I will go through the woods, toward the high-road, and see if he is coming," and putting on her bonnet and shawl, she set out. She had just entered the wood when two advancing figures caught her attention. The path was so narrow that they were walking one behind the other.

"Ah! there he is—and John Dulan is with him," exclaimed the mother as they drew near.

The foremost man was indeed John Dulan, who held out his hand as they met.

"Ah! how do you do, John? How do you do? This is so kind of you! But, stand aside—excuse me—I want to see that youth behind you!" and the widow brushed past him, and caught to her bosom—old Ben, the ferryman.

"My gracious! I thought you were my son! Dear me, how absurd!" exclaimed the widow, releasing him.

"Let us go on to the cottage, aunt," said John Dulan, sadly.

"Yes, do. I am looking every minute for William. Oh, you can tell me, Uncle Ben—did he reach the ferry last night?"

"Yes, madam," groaned the old man.

"Why, you alarm me! Why didn't he come home, then?"

"He did try—he did try! I begged him not to—but he would! Oh, dear! oh, dear!"

"Why, what in Heaven's name is the matter? What has happened? Is my son ill?"

"Tell her, Mr. Dulan—tell her! I could not, to save my life!"

The widow turned very pale.

"Where is William? Where is my son? Is he ill? Is he ill?"

"My dearest aunt, do try to compose yourself!" said John Dulan, in a trembling voice.

"Where is my son? Where is he?"

"You cannot see him to-day——"

"Yet he was at the ferry-house last night! Great God! it cannot be!" cried the mother, suddenly growing very pale and faint. "Oh, no! Merciful Providence—such sorrow cannot be in store for me? He is not——"

She could not finish the sentence, but turned a look of agonizing inquiry on John Dulan. He did not speak.

"Answer! answer! answer!" almost screamed the mother.

John Dulan turned away.

"Is my son—is my son—dead?"

"He is in heaven, I trust," sobbed John.

A shriek, the most wild, shrill and unearthly that ever came from the death-throe of a breaking heart, arose upon the air, and echoed through the woods, and the widow sunk, fainting, to the ground. They raised her up—the blood was flowing in torrents from her mouth. They bore her to the house, and laid her on the bed. John

Dulan watched beside her, while the old man hastened to procure assistance.

The life of the widow was despaired of for many weeks. She recovered from one fit of insensibility, only to relapse into another. At length, however, she was pronounced out of danger. But the white hair, silvered within the last few weeks, the strained eyes, contracted brow and shuddering form, marked the presence of a scathing sorrow.

One day, while lying in this state, a traveling carriage drew up before the door, and a young, fair girl, clad in deep mourning, alighted and entered. Elizabeth, who was watching beside her, stooped down and whispered very low:

"The betrothed bride of your son."

The young girl approached the bed, and, taking the hand of the sufferer, exclaimed: "Mother, mother, you are not alone in your sorrow! I have come to live or die by you, as my strength may serve!"

The widow opened her arms and received her in an embrace. They wept. The first blessed tears that had relieved the burdened heart of either were shed together.

Alice never left her. When the widow was sufficiently recovered, they went to England. The best years of the life of Alice were spent in soothing the declining days of William Dulan's mother. The face of Alice was the last object her eyes rested on in life; and the hands of Alice closed them in death.

Alice never married, but spent the remainder of her life in ministering to the suffering poor around her.

I neglected to mention that, during the illness of Mrs. Dulan, the body of her son was found, and interred in this spot, by the request of his mother.

"What becomes of the moral?" you will say.

I have told you a true story. Had I created these beings from imagination, I should also have judged them —punished the bad and rewarded the good. But these people actually lived, moved, and had their being in the real world, and have now gone to render in their account to their Divine Creator and Judge. The case of Good *versus* Evil, comes on in another world, at another tribunal, and, no doubt, will be equitably adjudged.

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As I fear my readers may be dying to know what farther became of our cheery set of travelers, I may, on some future occasion, gratify their laudable desire after knowledge; only informing them at present that we did reach our destination at ten o'clock that night, in safety, although it was very dark when we passed down the dreaded Gibbet Hill and forded the dismal Bloody Run Swamp. That Aunt Peggy's cap was not mashed by Uncle Clive's hat, and that Miss Christine did not put her feet into Cousin Kitty's bandbox, to the demolition of her bonnet; but that both bonnet and cap survived to grace the heads of their respective proprietors. The only mishap that occurred, dear reader, befell your obsequious servitor, who went to bed with a sick headache, caused

really by her acute sympathy with the misfortunes of the hero and heroine of our aunt's story, but which Miss Christine grossly attributed to a hearty supper of oysters and soft crabs, eaten at twelve o'clock at night, which, of course, you and I know, had nothing at all to do with it.

A LITERARY WIFE

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN

A LITERARY WIFE

"MORNING, noon and night—all the time reading and idling about! What a shameful, yes, wicked waste of time! Oh, I declare, I shall not be surprised if one of these nights, the ghost of some one, or every one, of my industrious, hard-working ancestors came to warn me of my danger. Oh, I must get over this, indeed! Such a wife would ruin any man less than a millionaire. Thank Heaven, I have not committed myself; but there is no denying I do like Louise Hobart better than any girl I ever knew. And I think she is really charming. But I've seen what a terrible misfortune a lazy wife is to a man, in our own family. Jack's wife has pretty near ruined him. Well, I'm glad I can get over this; but it will come kind of hard; I've spent the evenings so pleasantly with Louise. How well she does talk! Any man might be proud of her. But talking won't make the pot boil. And a poor government clerk might need a wife who could help not only to make his pot boil, but to put something in it too."

Just here Charley Fulton's thoughts and steps were arrested by some one catching hold of him, and exclaiming:

"Stop! Hold on, Fulton! What's up! You are going ahead at such a mad rate, I could hardly catch up to you. Are you trying to escape the Evil One?"

"Maybe I am," returned Charley, with more meaning in his words than his friend Ned Wilmer knew. "I did not know I was traveling so fast, however."

"Yes, I saw you when you came out of Mr. Hobart's. Rather an early call, Charley?" his friend said, inquiringly.

"Yes; I only called to invite Louise to the concert tonight, but she is engaged—"

"Yes, old fellow, I was before you this time," Ned said, smiling pleasantly; then putting his arm through Charley's, he added: "I have wanted an opportunity to talk to you, Fulton. We have so long been friends, I should regret very much that anything should interrupt our kindly intercourse."

"Why, what do you mean? I can imagine no cause—"

"Charley, yes. You like Louise Hobart, I believe?"

"Yes, very much."

"And so do I. More than this, I shall win her, if possible," Ned Wilmer said, looking at his friend as though he expected and was prepared for some fierce demonstration.

"All right! Go ahead. My dear boy, I shall not feel any the less kindly if you succeed. Indeed, you have my best wishes for your success," Charley answered, extending his hand.

"What! you are not really in earnest? Surely, you must have felt differently, or why have you been such a constant visitor there?" Ned Wilmer asked.

"I'll tell *you* just what I was telling myself when you came up. I do like Louise very much. She is really charming. But, Ned, she is not the girl for

either you or me. You know how very idle, yes, and wasteful she is. Think how much time, yes, and money, too, is lost so. Poor clerks should choose girls who will *help* them, not be a burden such as I fear Louise will prove. Now you know just what it is that makes me so calm at the prospect of another winning her."

"You are wise, perhaps. I know Louise's failing — I suppose we must call it — but I can't resist the love which increases every hour I am with her. If I can win her I shall. So let me have the coast clear, and I will thank you."

"Oh, come, don't banish me so suddenly. Let me drop in occasionally. I cannot resign the pleasure of her society entirely just yet. I must come to it gradually. I declare I would sooner listen to Louise's talk than go to any opera, theater or lecture; yes, or eat the best dinner that ever was cooked. But you know, Ned, *that* gift is not going to make a home comfortable or happy."

"I only know that I love her," answered Ned.

Just at that moment Charley raised his hat to a lady passing, remarking, when she was out of hearing:

"That girl, I am sure, will make the man happy who may be so fortunate as to win her. At school she was the most industrious little body I ever saw. Even during the recreation hours she was always working at something. She is just my idea of what a woman should be."

"Well, I wonder you have not tried to win the prize," Ned Wilmer said.

"I believe I should, but for— What shall I say? Not the superior attractions of another — nor the

brilliancy. But all is not gold that glitters, you know. Well, we part here. Good morning."

Ned Wilmer's heart was lighter than for many months. He had greatly feared Charley Fulton would win the girl he loved. And now that he had good hope of securing the one, and retaining the friendship of the other, he was in a very happy state of mind.

That night Charley called on Annie Warner, the young girl of whom he had spoken so highly that morning.

Although he found other company, Annie's fingers were as busy as her tongue; indeed, more so: the latter often rested, the former never, even when entertaining friends.

Never were girls more dissimilar than Louise Hobart and Annie Warner: the one brilliant, sparkling, and really gifted; but — well, of her failings, as the young men agreed to term them, enough has been said.

Well assured was Charley Fulton that from such, Annie, gentle, sweet little Annie Warner was free. No one ever found her idling her time over old books, or new ones. She was the tidiest little housekeeper; could make the best bread, nicest and lightest pies, puddings and cakes; was the most skilful seamstress— in fact, knew everything except what Charley thought was perfectly useless, and he said:

"What is the good of a woman knowing all about every book and its author, from the very first that was ever written to those of the present time? I truly believe Louise Hobart does. If a man wants a history, biography, or encyclopædia, he can buy them — not get a wife that is a combination of all. I pity poor Ned!"

During the evening a circumstance occurred which really decided Charley's future.

Annie's father came in, bringing a box wrapped and securely tied. Handing it to Annie, he said:

"A present for you, daughter."

Her eyes sparkled with pleasure as she thanked him and began to untie the cord. The knots were stubborn, resisting her efforts.

Charley pulled out his knife, and her brother said:

"Oh, cut it, Annie. We are all eager for a look."

"So am I," she answered. "But it will be too bad to waste such a nice string; it will do to use again."

After at least five minutes spent in picking and pulling, the knots loosened. Annie wound up the cord, secured the end, and laid it aside. Then the paper was taken off and nicely folded, for future use, too, before Annie opened the box.

"That girl is the one for me. No fear of her proving other than a helpmate," Charley said, gazing with admiration on Annie, who drew from the box a beautiful sealskin muff and tippet.

As Charley's mind reverted again to this incident, another was remembered which proved conclusively to his mind the wasteful disposition of Louise.

One evening, a few weeks previous, while Charley and Ned Wilmer sat listening to a poem Louise was reading, a playful kitten found its way into her workbasket, and was not discovered until half a dozen skeins of silk and as many spools of cotton were dragged about the floor, and in such a condition that it would have taken some skill and a great deal of patience to untangle the threads.

Louise looked at the mass a moment, then, clipping

away the spools, threw the snarled bunches into the fire, saying:

"Pshaw! I could read half a dozen chapters, or spend the time in thinking, which is next best to reading, that it would take to untangle that. I won't waste so many precious moments."

Inwardly Charley congratulated himself on his escape.

After one or two more visits to Louise, which strengthened his belief that she would make poor Ned rue the day he married her, if he should do so, Charley devoted himself earnestly to his wooing; Ned Wilmer doing likewise.

At the end of six months both were married to the girls of their choice. Calls were exchanged between the brides, and occasionally, at long intervals, after. But as there was but little congeniality, there could be no intimacy.

Ned Wilmer was very warmly attached to his friend, and would drop in for an hour in the evening, two or three times a year. Thus four years were passed.

Ned Wilmer came in one evening, and after watching Louise, who, as usual, was absorbed in a book, said:

"I'm just from Fulton's."

"Indeed!" Louise said, closing her book, and asking, "How are they? Is Mrs. Fulton just such an industrious little body as ever? Come, tell me all about them. I see from your eyes you have lots of news."

"No, not much news. I found them well, and Mrs. Fulton busily engaged with a new sewing machine. I wonder you have not wanted one, Louise. Charley is very anxious I should purchase one for you."

"I don't want it. I detest them. I don't care a

snap for ruffles, tucks, puffs, and such fixings, for myself; and I'm not going to get the children up in that style. I want to cultivate their taste for something higher than the latest fashions—"

"But I should think it would be a source of amusement," interrupted Ned.

"No, indeed, I'm not going to spend *my* leisure hours over a sewing machine. After the necessary work is done, your wants and the children's attended to, you know — I always have near me the best amusement in the world, *I* think," Louise answered, holding up her book.

"Yes, dear, I know. But what does your reading profit your family?"

Louise's face flushed quickly, and her husband hastened to add:

"I am perfectly satisfied, dear. You do all I care to have you, as long as I keep my office and good health. But both are uncertain. Now Charley tells me *his* wife makes sufficient to dress herself and the children by her machine — stitching for a few friends. She can easily make twenty dollars a month just by working a few hours in the evening."

Louise's lip curled as she repeated:

"Twenty dollars! Working away health and strength that should be saved for her children's sake, for twenty dollars a month!"

"Louise, I would not consent to have you do so. But, dear, suppose Charley and I both should lose our offices, which family would likely suffer the least?"

"I don't know anything about what Charley Fulton's family would do; but I *do* know *yours* would not suffer for anything."

"How could it be otherwise?" Ned asked.

"I would not let either you or yours," Louise answered, her face glowing brightly.

"*You*, child! What could you do, except to love us with your whole heart, and read and talk? Oh, if either of those would pay, wouldn't we be rich, love?" Ned said, raising her face and kissing the pouting lips.

"Yes, good reading does pay, just as well as good feeding. It has improved my mind, and I can write books myself," Louise answered, with sparkling eyes.

"You write, Louise! Well, perhaps you might, if you would try—"

"*Might!*" she said, interrupting him. "I *have* written stories, and they have been published, and paid for, too. I have never told you this, because I know many gentlemen have a horror of literary women. Since my marriage my time has been devoted to you and our little ones. I have seen no necessity for my using this gift or talent, therefore have husbanded my strength for use when the time comes. Now, sir, if the test comes, you shall *see* if you have such a good-for-nothing wife."

Ned was too surprised to *say* anything for a few moments; but he did *look* at his wife, and with admiration quite sufficient to satisfy her.

It was not long before the test came. Charley lost his position by a change in the administration; and Ned Wilmer, after an attack of pneumonia, was left with a bronchial affection, which was considered so serious that his physician insisted he should go to Florida.

Then Louise went to work — *then* her husband and the world knew what she could do.

After the leave granted him by the department expired Louise insisted upon his resigning and remaining South. In a few months she went with the children to join him, and stayed for two years, until Ned was fully restored to his usual good health.

Bravely Charley Fulton's wife worked, too, doing no less than her husband had believed she could and would. But Louise! Charley Fulton could scarcely credit his eyes and ears. To do him justice, he would not have exchanged his own devoted and loving little wife for any other woman; yet he could not help the thought frequently entering his mind, when he so often heard Louise's praises, "Was he wise?"

THE END.

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